

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

LGBCE REVIEW OF CHESHIRE EAST



Report Reference C-23-35
Meeting Date 25th March 2024
Agenda Item 11
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is the independent body reporting to Parliament on governance arrangements for principal authorities in England. Its primary function is undertaking reviews of the number of councillors and warding arrangements of principal authorities which it does periodically. The LGBCE can also undertake reviews of external boundaries (e.g. to respond to development across borders) and produce recommendations on the creation of new unitary authorities (though it has not been asked to do so by government since 2009).

The LGBCE has commenced a periodic review of arrangements for Cheshire East Council. It has already determined that the number of councillors will remain unchanged (82) and therefore the review will focus on the warding arrangements for the borough. The objective is to ensure warding arrangements reflect local communities whilst providing parity of elector/councillor numbers within a 10% margin. This is very similar to the review undertaken of parishes by Cheshire East Council which concluded in 2023.

Cheshire East Council has undertaken a significant amount of work producing its own proposals to the LGBCE, in some areas there is little change, in others there are significant changes to warding arrangements, including the creation of new wards. The borough council agreed its submission on 27th February.

The closing date for submissions for this stage of the review is 1st April. The LGBCE will then consult on its proposals between August and October and publish final recommendations in January 2025. Changes, once approved by Parliament, will be implemented for the 2027 elections.

2.0 PROPOSALS FOR KNUTSFORD

The community governance review of parish arrangements enlarged Knutsford parish to include land to the west of the town (including the new Tabley Park development) and a small piece of land on the Longridge industrial estate. The former area is currently within High Legh ward the latter within Mobberley ward, whilst the remainder is Knutsford ward.

The submission by Cheshire East Council proposes that the Knutsford ward boundary mirror the boundary for Knutsford parish and that it remains a single ward election three members. The paperwork prepared as part of their review notes that the electors per seat ratio would be 6% below the borough average but that this balanced by strongly reflecting community identity.

The map of the proposed revised Knutsford ward is appended to this report.

3.0 DECISION REQUIRED

Council should:

- a) Determine if it supports the proposals submitted by Cheshire East Council in respect of changes to Knutsford ward
- b) Determine if it wishes to make any further submission in respect of the review
- c) Authorise the Town Clerk to prepare a submission in line with the council's position

Proposed Borough Ward: Knutsford

