

1. This document forms an addendum to Item 11 on the agenda and accompanies the two appendices which have been circulated to members.
2. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is currently undertaking an electoral review of West Northamptonshire Council. This process requires the LGBCE to consult stakeholders in order to assist the Commission in formulating revised arrangements. The LGBCE previously consulted on the future size of the Council. The Council suggested a range of 77-82 councillors and the LGBCE announced a 'minded to' decision for a future Council size of 77.
3. The report presented to members at this meeting asks Council to note the work undertaken to date and approve a submission to the LGBCE in response to this consultation. The Democracy and Standards Committee has been responsible for overseeing the preparation of the Council's response to date. At the last meeting of the Committee on 20th October 2022, the Committee reviewed a draft submission and made comments. The Committee took the view that further work was required and delegated authority to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to make amendments to the proposed submission to the LGBCE and to finalise the submission in light of any comments prior to submission to Full Council. A revised proposal for ward patterns based on a future council size of 77 councillors was prepared and it attached as Appendix B.
4. As part of that process comments were made about the overall number of councillors (77) and the relative balance of councillors between urban and rural areas. As a result, it was suggested that the Council prepare a revised submission based on 78 councillors, which would allow a satisfactory balance between urban and rural areas. The LGBCE were consulted and agreed that this would be permissible. Appendix A sets out such a proposal. Revised recommendations are set out below (additional text in bold).
5. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council:

- a) Notes the work of the cross-party working group and the Democracy and Standards Committee on the second phase of electoral arrangements for West Northamptonshire;
- b) Approves the document set out at Appendix A for submission to the LGBCE **as the Council's primary response based on a council size of 78, as well as the Council's secondary response based on a council size of 77 set out at Appendix B; and**
- c) Delegates authority to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chair of the Democracy and Standards Committee to make any minor amendments to the wording of the proposed submission to the LGBCE and to finalise the submission in light of any comments from this Council and any minor or typographical changes identified.