

Report To:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 th December 2018
Lead Member/Officer:	Councillor Mark Young, Lead Member for Corporate Standards Gary Williams, Head of Legal, HR & Democratic Services
Report Author:	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager
Title:	Electoral Review of Denbighshire

1. What is the report about?

The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales are undertaking Electoral Reviews of all 22 local authorities in Wales. This report covers Denbighshire's Electoral Review.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Following a consultation by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) in 2017 on the criteria for the review, the Commission has now published its draft proposals for Denbighshire, attached as Appendix 1. The Commission invites responses to its proposals by the 13th December.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council confirms its formal response to the Commission's draft proposals for the electoral arrangements of the county of Denbighshire.

4. Report details

- 4.1 The Commission will be undertaking a review of all 22 local authorities which began in January 2017, presenting final recommendations to the Welsh Government before the 2022 local government elections.
- 4.2 The objective of an electoral review is to ensure that, within each local authority area, electoral arrangements seek to achieve parity. This means the Commission is required to seek to ensure that the ratio of local government electors to the number of members of the Council is, as nearly as may be, the same in every electoral ward in Denbighshire. Utilising the existing community structure within a local authority, an electoral review will also take into account community identities and consultation feedback to ensure that the Commission's proposals uphold the interests of effective and convenient local government for the electorate within Wales.
- 4.3 An electoral review may therefore consider:
 - The number of members on the Council
 - The boundaries of the electoral wards
 - The number of members to be elected for any electoral ward

- The name of any electoral ward

4.4 In 2017 a working group of members established with the group leaders met in November 2017 and January 2018 and their recommendations to the Commission are shown as Appendix 2. The working group met again in November 2018 to review the Commission's draft proposals and its conclusions are shown in Appendix 3.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

No direct contribution.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

The costs of the changes proposed by the Commission are covered in paragraph 9 below. The effect on support services from increasing the size of the Council by 1 member is negligible and the proposed increase is intended to improve the councillor to electorate ratio in the county.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

The Electoral Review is a statutory exercise being conducted by the Commission for the Welsh Government. A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Representatives from the Commission met with Group Leaders and Council officials in September 2017 and addressed full Council in October 2017 to outline the scope of the review and clarify the process to be used. The Commission returned in September 2018 to introduce their draft proposals to Group Leaders. A working group of members has met to consider the scope of the review and the draft proposals.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The changes proposed by the Commission are relatively minor and most involve changes to the internal electoral boundaries of the county which would not have a financial effect. The Commission is proposing to increase the size of the Council from 47 to 48 members which would require an increase in the members' support budget.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The aims of an electoral review are to provide effective and convenient local government and it will be in Denbighshire's interest to contribute appropriately to the review process to achieve these aims.

11. Power to make the Decision

The Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013 including sections 21, 29, 30 and 34 relating to the conduct of electoral reviews.