

## MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<b>From: Leader of the Council</b>	<b>Report Number: MC/17/14</b>
<b>To: Mid Suffolk Council</b>	<b>Date of meeting: 8 August 2017</b>

### BOUNDARY REVIEW – RESPONSE TO STAGE ONE CONSULTATION ON WARDING PATTERNS

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Council's response to the stage one consultation on warding patterns, which is part of the further electoral review of the Mid Suffolk district being conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the proposal attached as an appendix to this report be submitted as Mid Suffolk District Council's formal response to the consultation.
- 2.2 That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit the consultation response on behalf of the Council, and to include any relevant information arising from the Council's debate which provides further context and rationale behind the proposal.

#### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

#### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The LGBCE are responsible for conducting the review and for ensuring compliance with all relevant legal provisions.

#### 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. 5c. Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
That the LGBCE determine a warding pattern for Mid Suffolk that does not provide equal democratic representation and fails to take into	2 - Unlikely	3 – Bad	The Council is responding to the consultation and all councillors have had the opportunity to contribute to the consultation

account community identity.			response.
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## 6. Consultations

- 6.1 For the purposes of this stage of the further electoral review the Council is a consultee and is not responsible for conducting the consultation. The Council is supporting the LGBCE with its consultation activities through our communications channels and assisting with parish liaison events.

## 7. Equality Analysis

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

## 8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 8.1 This report supports the ongoing joint working arrangements of the two Councils.

## 9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

- 9.1 This report supports the Enabled and Efficient Organisation programme.

## 10. Key Information

- 10.1 The LGBCE is currently undertaking a further electoral review of the Mid Suffolk district. This is an intervention review as there is currently electoral inequality within some of the Mid Suffolk wards which surpasses the LGBCE's tolerances. It is running concurrently with a review of the Babergh district. In February 2017 the Council agreed that a council size of 34 councillors would be adequate for the effective operation of the Council and for representing the residents of Mid Suffolk district. The LGBCE was minded to accept this council size and on 13 June 2017 commenced stage one of the consultation on warding patterns.
- 10.2 The consultation will close on 14 August 2017 and the LGBCE, with support from the Council, has undertaken specific activities to engage local communities in the consultation including a briefing event for parish councils. The LGBCE is wholly responsible for conducting the consultation and in that regard the District Council is only a consultee and has a choice about whether or not to respond. However, there is a strong expectation that the District Council will show leadership in this exercise and submit a reasoned and sound response.
- 10.3 It is recommended that the proposal appended to this report is submitted as the Council's response to the consultation. The proposal has been developed through a series of workshops and drop-in sessions that were open to all councillors and further refined by a cross-party task and finish group.
- 10.4 In developing this proposal consideration has been given to achieving electoral equality, having clearly identifiable boundaries and reflecting community interests and identities. The electoral equality figures have been calculated using the projected electorate for 2022 of 82,781. A council size of 34 therefore results in a ratio of 2,435 electors per councillor. The LGBCE recognises that absolute electoral equality is highly improbable so also applies a ten percent threshold either side of the ratio which has resulted in a range of 2,191 to 2,678 electors. The LGBCE will

consider warding patterns which are based on minor variations to the council size if it represents a better fit in terms of logical warding and maintaining community identities.

- 10.5 The proposal represents excellent electoral equality with only one of the multi-member wards being marginally outside of the plus or minus ten percent threshold. Significant attention has been given to maintaining established community identities and creating a warding pattern that provides room for growth in electorates without significantly exceeding the electoral equality thresholds.
- 10.6 At this stage the proposal has given no regard as to how Stowmarket, a warded parish, might be sub-divided. Simply a total number of councillors has been provided.

## 11. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Proposal Map	Attached
(b) Proposal Electorate Figures	Attached

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