



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title: **General Purposes**

Meeting Date: **Thursday 30th May, 2019**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Venue: **Committee Room 18.10, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Members: **Councillors:**

Tim Mitchell (Chairman)
Paul Swaddle (Vice-Chairman)
Melvyn Caplan
David Boothroyd

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.



An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Reuben Segal, Acting Head of Committee and Governance Services.

**Tel: 020 7641 3160; Email: rsegal@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Director of Law in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

The Director of Law to note any changes to the membership

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any personal or prejudicial interests in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2019.

(Pages 3 - 4)

**4. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION (LGBC)
REVIEW OF ELECTORAL WARDS WITHIN THE
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL BOUNDARY**

Report of the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

(Pages 5 - 10)

**Stuart Love
Chief Executive
22 May 2019**



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

General Purposes

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Purposes** held at 6.00pm on **Wednesday 27th February, 2019** in Room 18.04, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Tim Mitchell (Chairman), David Boothroyd, Melvyn Caplan and Jacqui Wilkinson

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 The Committee noted that Councillor Melvyn Caplan and Councillor Jacqui Wilkinson had replaced Councillors Robert Rigby and Paul Swaddle.

1.2 There were no further changes to the Membership.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations.

3 MINUTES

3.1 That the Chairman, with the consent of the members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2019 as a true and correct record of proceedings.

4 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION - SUBMISSION FROM THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

4.1 The Committee considered a draft submission by the City of Westminster to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on the council size. This submission formed part of the preliminary stage of the Commission's Electoral Review of the City of Westminster.

4.2 The Manager of Legal and Electoral Services Support tabled a revised draft submission which included more detail on the rationale for reducing the number of councillors from 60 to 54. This included evidence of the increasing number of backbench councillors that are not involved in the broader governance of the council and how the interaction between councillors, stakeholders and residents had evolved since the last review approximately

twenty years ago as well as a comparison of electoral population to councillors in neighbouring boroughs.

- 4.3 The Committee agreed that the proposal to reduce the number of members from 60 to 54 was feasible but that any further reduction would have an adverse impact on council business and councillor's work load. Members noted that since 2006 a significant number of Members had not sat on either a Policy and & Scrutiny Committee or an Audit & Performance Committee. The Committee agreed that for optimum councillor effectiveness, a significant majority of members should have a place in the Executive or the broader governance of the Council as a whole, as well as their Ward role.
- 4.4 Members discussed the current ratio of councillors per ward. It was suggested that retaining three councillors per ward was preferable. Members commented that a reduction in numbers could make it more challengeable and cause difficulties for ward councillors in particular in balancing their daily Council duties and those of their constituencies. Members commented that having an odd number of councillors in each Ward would help to alleviate the above-mentioned concerns.
- 4.5 Members supported the inclusion of information regarding the Council's vision to create a 'City of All' alongside the 'unique characteristics' that are found within the Borough.
- 4.6 The Committee discussed Westminster's future population projections which were set out in section 4.4 of the submission. Members requested that the Boundary Commission's electoral and growth forecasts be removed as it was considered that the Council's own projections, which include regional planning approvals, would be more accurate. The Committee noted that a reduction to 54 Councillors would still put Westminster City Council in the lower quartile of councillors to electors in London.
- 4.7 The Committee also put forward a number of minor additional formatting revisions.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised submission as tabled be agreed as the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on Council size subject to the requested amendments as set out above.
2. That the submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England be circulated to all members.

The Meeting ended at 6.40 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____



City of Westminster

General Purposes Report

Meeting or Decision Maker:	General Purposes Committee
Date:	30 th May 2019
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) Review of Electoral Wards within the Westminster City Council boundary
Key Decision:	None.
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates progress with respect to the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) review of electoral wards within the Westminster City Council boundary.
- 1.2 This review is taking place because of the number of wards in Westminster which breached the acceptable threshold for the variation in the number of electors from the ward average in December 2018.
- 1.3 In phase 1 of the review, the LGBC consulted with the Council on the most appropriate number of councillors to be elected to the council in the future. Two submissions were received and the Commission “is minded” to recommend that 54 councillors should serve Westminster in the future. This is 6 fewer than the current number of Councillors.
- 1.4 The review is now in the second phase. This phase considers warding arrangements, and requires the redrawing of some or all of Westminster’s wards to produce an equitable number of electors. The number of electors used, are those forecast for 2024.
- 1.5 Interested parties are required to submit proposals for ward names and boundaries directly to the LGBC. This phase, open to the public, runs from the 26th March to 3rd June 2019.
- 1.6 Full details around the operating context in Westminster, and the proposed number of Councillors can be found in the submission made in phase 1 on the LGBC web-site.

1.7 This paper provides details on elector numbers, which are the basis for future warding decisions, and clarity around the subsequent steps in the review process.

2. Recommendations

- The committee notes the data in the report
- The committee is invited to comment on warding proposals and make recommendations, for any submission to the LGBC.

3. Reasons for Decision

No decisions are required on the contents of this paper

4. Background, including Policy Context

i. Background to electorate inequality

- Westminster's current ward arrangements no longer provide for equitable voting across the City. Differential population growth rates, occupation of property spaces and migration patterns of non-eligible adults have all contributed to variances in the number of electors in each ward.
- The electorate figures for December 2018 with deviations from the Westminster mean are shown below.

Table 1 - Westminster elector variations in December 2018

Ward	Electoral Roll - Dec 2018	Dec 2018 ward variations from the ward average
Abbey Road	6,457	-5%
Bayswater	6,609	-3%
Bryanston and Dorset Square	6,722	-1%
Church Street	7,395	9%
Churchill	6,522	-4%
Harrow Road	8,038	18%
Hyde Park	6,941	2%
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	4,407	-35%
Lancaster Gate	7,126	5%
Little Venice	6,827	0%
Maida Vale	6,924	2%
Marylebone High Street	5,833	-14%
Queen's Park	8,370	23%
Regent's Park	6,947	2%
St James's	7,220	6%
Tachbrook	5,801	-15%
Vincent Square	7,363	8%
Warwick	6,391	-6%

West End	6,087	-11%
Westbourne	8,290	22%

- Thresholds for a Boundary Commission review are breached
 - When any ward has an electoral variance of over 30% from the electoral average
 - OR
 - Where **more than 30% of wards** have a variance of over 10% from the average
- The disproportionate representation in Westminster is caused by both a breach of the 30% tolerance (in Knightsbridge and Belgravia) and by 7 wards (35%) having a variance of over 10% from the mean.

Too few electors (each vote has too much weight)	Too many electors (each ward has too little weight)
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	Harrow Road
Tachbrook	Queen's Park
Marylebone High Street	Westbourne
West End	

ii. Forecasting future elector numbers

- In Phase 1 of the LGBC review, Westminster forecast the number of electors in 2024 that would be present in each of the existing polling districts and wards.
- The methodology used the 2024 forecast made by the Office for National Statistics forecast (as contained in the LGBC model) as the Borough total.
- The number of electors at a local level was estimated by applying local property occupation and elector rates, to planned developments in the City. Only those developments in Westminster's 5-15 year resident planning pipeline which both have planning consent and are estimated to be completed by 2024 were included.
- The figures were submitted to the LGBC in Phase 1 (which ended on 19th March 2019) and accepted as the base for ward boundary considerations.
- Following this initial submission Westminster developed a tool with granular mapping capabilities at the postcode level.
- During this phase, a small number of electors were moved across ward boundaries to reflect the improvement in mapping accuracy. Westminster submitted a further set of figures to the LGBC in April.
- These figures are shown in the table below. They have not been updated on the LGBC public website, which is "frozen" as Phase 2 starts.

Table 2 – Elector forecasts submitted in Phase 1, and used in Phase 2 modelling

Ward	WCC data submitted in Phase 1	Refined Westminster Data (post GIS modelling) used in Phase 2
Abbey Road	6,887	6,881
Bayswater	7,108	6,976
Bryanston and Dorset Square	7,040	6,990
Church Street	8,429	8,406
Churchill	7,939	7,915
Harrow Road	8,324	8,315
Hyde Park	8,712	8,737
Knightsbridge and Belgravia	4,542	4,517
Lancaster Gate	7,675	7,756
Little Venice	8,052	8,007
Maida Vale	7,260	7,317
Marylebone High Street	6,332	6,303
Queen's Park	8,655	8,673
Regent's Park	7,193	7,208
St James's	9,006	9,013
Tachbrook	6,147	6,126
Vincent Square	8,020	7,998
Warwick	6,767	6,781
West End	6,772	6,957
Westbourne	8,911	8,895
Total	149,771	149,771

- The refined figures have been used in a boundary tool provided to the two represented Political Parties with Councillors in Westminster.
- No change has been made to the City total number of electors.

5. Next Steps

- Interested parties will need to submit proposals or comments to the LGBC by the 3rd June. All proposals and comments will be read and taken into consideration by the LGBC. They will also be published on their website.
- Based on the information that the LGBC receive they will then produce draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements.
- The LGBC will then open a new stage (phase 3) of consultations to see what members of the public think of the plans for their area.
- Phase 3 is due to run from the 30th July to the 7th October 2019.

6. **Legal Implications** - this a noting paper and there are no legal implications arising from it.
7. **Background Papers** – The Phase 1 Number of Councillors report. Presented to the General Purposes Committee on 27th February 2019.

This page is intentionally left blank