

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORE SERVICES

TITLE: Submission the Local Government Boundary Commission on the future size of the Council

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	12 July 2023
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Core Services
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

As part of the ongoing Local Government Boundary Review, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England requires the council to submit its view on the number of elected members it should have from 2026 onwards.

Council Plan priority

N/A

Recommendations

That Cabinet:-

1. Recommend to Council that the draft submission contained in Appendix 1 be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The first stage of the Local Government Boundary Review is for the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCE) to determine how many elected members the council should have in the future.
- 1.2 In coming to their decision, the Local Government Boundary Commission will consider submissions from the council and any other interested groups. They will not carry out a public consultation.
- 1.3 The submission should seek to give the commission an understanding of the

operation of the council and the specific circumstances of the local area. It should also consider:

- Strategic Leadership – how many councillors are needed to give strategic leadership and direction to the authority?
- Accountability – how many councillors are needed to provide scrutiny to the authority – how many councillors are needed to meet the regulatory requirements of the authority? – how many councillors are required to manage partnerships between the local authority and other organisations?
- Community Leadership – how the representational role of councillors in the local community is discharged and how they engage with people and conduct casework.

1.4 When recommending its future size the submission should provide evidence that several different council size options have been explored together with the reasons why a particular figure has, or has not, been selected.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 We believe that our current structures support strategic leadership, accountability and community leadership well. However, councillor workloads are very high, with many councillors fitting their substantial council responsibilities around work outside their council duties. We believe that the future will present ever greater demands on councillor time. Since the last review of Barnsley MBC there has been substantial devolution of powers to South Yorkshire that have required significant involvement from Barnsley MBC councillors to direct and hold to account. The potential devolution combined with increased demands from the electorate lead us to believe that there is no prospect of these workloads decreasing in the medium term.

2.2 We therefore propose that the number of councillors for Barnsley MBC remains at 63.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

None

3.2 Legal

None

3.3 Equality

Not applicable

3.4 Sustainability

Decision-making wheel not completed – not applicable in this instance.

3.5 Employee

None

3.6 Communications

None

4. CONSULTATION

None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Increasing and decreasing the number of elected members is considered in the submission but were not considered as desirable.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 We consider that the present arrangement of 63 councillors for our electorate of 184678 is consistent with the arrangements at similar councils. The number of electors per elected member in Barnsley is 2931 which is very close to the median average of the 36 metropolitan boroughs at 3035. We also note that since the last electoral review in 2003, there has been insufficient population movement to trigger an electoral review and that there is, therefore, no case in demographic terms to alter the number of elected members.

7. GLOSSARY

None

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Proposed Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Senior Financial Services officer consulted and date
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted and date Sukdave Ghuman, 22/06/2023

Report Author: Peter Clark
Post: Head of Elections
Date:22/06/2023