04 November 2024

To: Tom Rutherford, LGBCE ([tom.rutherford@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:tom.rutherford@lgbce.org.uk))

Cc: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Dear Tom

**RE: Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review.**

I am pleased to enclose the formal submission on warding arrangements on behalf of Westmorland and Furness Council in respect of the current Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review.

The submission was prepared by a cross-party Member Working Group discussed at an all Member Briefing, and debated by Full Council today. The submission had overwhelming cross-party support, with 43 Members voting in support of the submission (5 against, and 4 abstentions).The proposed wards are the best option we have been able to develop, taking geography, community and the statutory criteria into account. Following discussions with local Members we recognise that in a small number of cases the wards do not fully reflect community identity and interests, these are highlighted in the report. However, while the importance of local communities cannot be overstated, it has not been possible to identify an alternative warding configuration that works as effectively to fulfil the three statutory criteria for these affected wards.

Specifically, the Councillors representing communities in the proposed wards of Appleby and Bongate, and Kirkby Stephen and Brough, and in the current High Furness ward, requested that we highlight that they felt the warding configuration in those areas did not fully represent the communities. This is set out in the submission.

For example, one Councillor expressed their view that the proposed Dalton and Low Furness ward should be split into urban and rural wards, and did not agree that retaining parishes entirely intact should be prioritised. However, the cross-party Member Working Group discussed this and other points at length, and noted that the alternative in this area would split a small part of Dalton parish (Newton Village) from the larger town for the purposes of electoral equality alone. The Working Group felt this would be detrimental to the communities, and this view was supported through the vote at Full Council.

Nonetheless, given some differences of opinion are noted, the Council agreed that highlighting these areas in the submission may be useful to enable the LGBCE to focus on these more challenging configurations.

However, as noted above, the Member Working Group developed a range of alternative configurations that did not meet the statutory criteria as effectively.

Please find enclosed:

* The proposed warding submission
* The covering report presented to Full Council
* The WardingSubmission.xlsx file outlining the allocation of areas to proposed wards
* The Shape files for the proposed wards

If you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me or my officers.

Kind regards

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Linda Jones

**Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer**

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