

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

Ms Becky Shaw
Chief Executive
East Sussex County Council
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1UE



22 September 2015

Dear Ms Shaw,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND DISTRICTS

I am writing to inform you that the Commission is inviting proposals for a new pattern of electoral divisions for East Sussex County Council and ward boundaries for each of the county's five districts. The consultation is part of our electoral review of all local authorities in the county.

The Commission has also announced the number of councillors it is minded to recommend for each authority which are shown below:

Local Authority	Current number of councillors	Recommended number of councillors	Change
East Sussex County Council	49	50	Increase of 1
Eastbourne Borough Council	27	27	No change
Hastings Borough Council	32	32	No change
Lewes District Council	41	41	No change
Rother District Council	38	38	No change
Wealden District Council	55	45	Reduction of 10

The Commission now invites proposals from the council, interested parties and members of the public on a pattern of county divisions and district wards to accommodate those councillors.

The consultation begins today and will end on 30 November 2015.

Publicising the review

I would be grateful if you could bring the consultation to the attention of elected members. A copy of the Commission's press release and posters advertising this stage of the review are being sent to your Council. It would be much appreciated if you could publicise the consultation by arranging for copies to be placed on display at local information points, and by taking such other steps as you consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of the public and other interested parties. In particular, we would appreciate it if you could promote the consultation online, via social media and any other channels you would normally use to engage residents.

Further details about the review are available on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk where there is information about how to get involved and the kind of evidence the Commission is seeking in support of any proposed scheme of divisions and wards. We have also created a web page for each local authority which includes further information and guidance on taking part in the review.

In addition, the Commission's consultation portal allows visitors to interact with online maps of the current electoral divisions and wards, draw their own boundaries and feed views into the consultation process directly. The portal is available at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

Submissions can also be made by email to reviews@lgbce.org.uk and by post to the address at the end of this letter.

Review timetable

This phase of consultation closes on **30 November 2015**.

Once the Commission has considered all the proposals received during this phase of consultation, it plans to publish draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for all six councils in March 2016. Public consultation on the draft recommendations is scheduled to take place between March 2016 and June 2016. Once the Commission has considered the representations and evidence as part of that consultation, it intends to publish final recommendations in September 2016.

New electoral arrangements for the county are scheduled to come into effect at the next scheduled elections following the completion of the review. This means that new electoral arrangements for East Sussex County Council will come into effect in May 2017, 2018 for Hastings and 2019 for the other districts in the county.

Creating a pattern of wards and divisions

In drawing up a pattern of wards and electoral divisions, the Commission must balance its three statutory criteria, namely:

- To deliver electoral equality where each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others in that local authority.
- That the pattern of wards and divisions should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

In drawing up county division boundaries, the Commission will also consider the desirability of ensuring that they are coterminous with the new district ward boundaries.

The table below summarises the overall framework within which the Commission plans to draw up its recommendations which you may find useful to guide your own proposals. In particular, the table includes the number of county councillors which are allocated to each district under a total council size of 50. The table also shows how many electors per councillor the Commission will aim to achieve in its scheme to deliver electoral fairness as well as any constraints on potential warding patterns such as the Commission's statutory duty to favour a uniform pattern of two-member wards across Hastings:

Local Authority	No. of district cllrs	No. of county cllrs	Electors per district cllr	Electors per county cllr	Notes
East Sussex County Council	N/A	50	N/A	8651	Possible mixed pattern of divisions (single- or multi-member)
Eastbourne Borough Council	27	9	2844	8651	Possible mixed pattern of wards (one-, two- or three-member wards)
Hastings Borough Council	32	8	2065	8651	Presumption in favour of two-member wards to reflect electoral cycle
Lewes District Council	41	9	1993	8651	Possible mixed pattern of wards (one-, two- or three-member wards)
Rother District Council	38	9	2027	8651	Possible mixed pattern of wards (one-, two- or three-member wards)
Wealden District Council	45	15	2909	8651	Possible mixed pattern of wards (one-, two- or three-member wards)

The Commission will test proposals against the criteria before drawing up draft recommendations. Accordingly, all proposals should demonstrate how they meet the three requirements. The Commission will take decisions based on the strength of the evidence presented to it and not merely on assertion. For example, details of community interests such as the location and use made of local facilities, services and local organisations will carry greater weight than submissions that simply assert that an area has community identity.

The Commission will consider all submissions on their merit. A well-evidenced submission from an individual which addresses the three statutory criteria will be more persuasive than one which does not, even if the latter is from an elected individual or body.

Further information on drawing up a pattern of wards or electoral divisions is available in our guidance document: *Electoral reviews: technical guidance* which can be found at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/policy-and-publications/guidance>.

We also publish a practical guide for putting forward submissions called *How to propose a pattern of wards* which is available at http://www.lgbce.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/25694/Proposing-new-wards-guidance-2015-08-04.pdf.

Our website includes information about previous electoral reviews where you can see how the Commission came to its conclusions and how other counties, districts and parishes built their own pattern of divisions and wards.

Please feel free to contact us at any time should you have any questions. Officers at the Commission will be happy to assist with technical aspects of your ward/division scheme either in person or via email or telephone.

Correspondence and enquiries

Correspondence relating to this review should be addressed to:

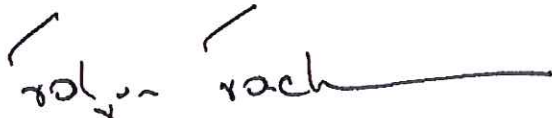
Review Officer (East Sussex)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor Millbank Tower,
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

or direct to your main contacts at the Commission who will be:

- Jo Porter, Review Officer
Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk; tel: 0330 500 1279.
- Lucy Ward, Review Officer
Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk; tel: 0330 500 1281.
- Tim Bowden, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk; tel: 0330 500 1270.

I am copying this letter to the organisations and individuals listed below.

Yours sincerely



Jolyon Jackson CBE
Chief Executive
Reviews@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1290

cc **MPs and MEPs with constituency interests in East Sussex**
Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner
Sussex Police Headquarters
Local organisations in East Sussex
Parish and town councils in East Sussex
Clinical Commissioning Groups in East Sussex

News Release

Embargoed until: 00.01, 22 September 2015

Have your say on new local government boundaries across East Sussex

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is asking local people for their help to draw up new boundaries for councils across East Sussex.

The Commission is reviewing the ward boundaries of all five district councils across East Sussex as well as the electoral divisions of the county council. The review means possible changes to the wards and divisions represented by every district and county councillor in East Sussex.

As part of the review, the Commission has also announced the number of councillors to be elected to each local authority in the county in future. The Commission proposes that East Sussex County Council should have 50 county councillors: one more than the current arrangements. For the county's district councils, the Commission proposes that they all retain their existing number of district councillors apart from Wealden where the Commission has agreed to reduce the number of councillors by ten (to 45) as proposed by the council.

The Commission now needs information from people and groups across East Sussex to help it to produce a new pattern of wards and electoral divisions to accommodate councillors in every part of the county.

In drawing up new boundaries, the Commission aims to deliver electoral equality for voters in council elections so that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters. The review also aims to ensure that the new wards and divisions reflect, as far as possible, the interests and identities of communities across East Sussex.

Max Caller, Chair of the Commission, said: "We are asking local people and organisations to help us draw up new ward and division boundaries across East Sussex.

"We are looking for evidence about local community identities and ties that will help us build district wards and electoral divisions throughout the county. We want to make sure that wards and divisions across the county are fair, mean something to voters and can help local councils deliver effective local government.

"Your views will make a difference.

"We will carefully consider all evidence that is provided during this phase of the review whoever it is from and whether it applies to the whole of East Sussex or just a small part of the county.

"We will publish all the submissions on our website so that local people can see all the various proposals we receive. Residents will then have a further chance to have their say after we publish our draft recommendations for the whole county in March 2016."

Local people have until **30 November 2015** to submit their views. Further information on the review and interactive maps of the existing divisions and wards can be found at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk and www.lgbce.org.uk.

ends

Notes to editors:

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, defining boundaries for local elections and the number of councillors to be elected, as well as conducting reviews of local government external boundaries and structures.
2. The aim of an electoral review is to provide for 'electoral equality'; that means each councillor representing approximately the same number of electors. The Commission must also have regard to community identity and interests and providing effective and convenient local government.
3. The Commission is carrying out a combined electoral review of all district councils in East Sussex alongside a review of the electoral divisions of East Sussex County Council. The review will decide the electoral arrangements of all six councils, namely:
 - The total number of councillors to be elected to each authority.
 - The boundaries of each ward or electoral division.
 - The number of councillors to be elected to each ward or electoral division.
 - The name of each ward or division.
4. The first stage of an electoral review is for the Commission to determine the total number of councillors to be elected to each local authority. The Commission has decided it is minded to recommend that each council in East Sussex should have the following number of councillors:

Local Authority	Current number of councillors	Recommended number of councillors	Change
East Sussex County Council	49	50	Increase of 1
Eastbourne Borough Council	27	27	No change
Hastings Borough Council	32	32	No change
Lewes District Council	41	41	No change
Rother District Council	38	38	No change
Wealden District Council	55	45	Reduction of 10

5. The types of questions the Commission is asking residents at this stage are:

- Do you have suggestions about where your ward or division boundaries should be?
- Which areas do you identify as your local community?
- Where do people in your area go to access local facilities such as shops and leisure activities?

6. Residents have from 22 September 2015 to 30 November 2015 to have their say about where electoral division and ward boundaries should be drawn in each local authority in East Sussex. The Commission will then publish its draft recommendations in March 2016 and open a further phase of consultation with local people. The new boundaries will come into force at the next local elections following publication of the Commission's final recommendations. This means that new electoral arrangements for East Sussex County Council will come into effect in May 2017, 2018 for Hastings and 2019 for the other districts in the county.

7. For councils, like Hastings, that hold elections in two years out of every four, the Commission has a responsibility, set out in legislation, to devise a pattern of two-member wards across the whole authority. Such a ward pattern means that every elector would have the same opportunity to vote in local elections each time they are held. However, the Commission is able to move away from a uniform pattern of two-member wards – on a ward by ward basis - if it believes an alternative arrangement would better meet its other statutory criteria: to deliver electoral equality for voters, to reflect the interests and identities of local communities and to promote effective and convenient local government.

8. Members of the public can have their say on their district or county division boundaries by writing to:

The Review Officer (East Sussex)
 Local Government Boundary Commission for England
 14th floor, Millbank Tower
 Millbank
 London SW1P 4QP

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Follow the Commission on Twitter: [@LGBCE](https://twitter.com/LGBCE)

Go directly to the Commission's consultation portal at: www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Link to dedicated web page for each council via: www.lgbce.org.uk

For further information contact the Commission's press office on: 0330 500 1525 / 1250 or email: press@lgbce.org.uk

