

Electoral Review of Cherwell



**Cherwell District Council
Submission to the Local Government
Boundary Commission for England
Of Proposed Warding Arrangements for
Cherwell District Council**

July 2014

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2012 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“LGBCE” or “the Commission”) announced that it would be conducting an electoral review of Cherwell. The review was triggered by the Commission’s belief, and Cherwell District Council’s (“CDC”) subsequent confirmation, that more than 30% of wards within CDC had an electoral variance in excess of 10% from the average for the Council.
- 1.2 The initial stage of an Electoral Review is to determine a preferred council size. This is the number of Councillors required to deliver effective and convenient local government. In October 2013 CDC submitted its proposal for a Council of 48 councillors retaining elections by thirds.
- 1.3 The LGBCE subsequently carried out a public consultation on council size during which on substantial arguments were submitted in objection to the proposal for 48 members. The Commission therefore adopted a council size for 48 for Cherwell District Council for the purpose of next stage of the review – consultation on warding arrangements.
- 1.4 This report is Cherwell District Council’s warding arrangements submission which was agreed by Full Council at their meeting of 7 July 2014.

NB. Insert decision of Council

2. Guidance on Warding Arrangements Submissions

Electoral Pattern

- 2.1 Cherwell District Council currently elects by thirds. Where a council elects by thirds, Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 provides that the Commission should have regard to the desirability of recommending that each ward returns three councillors, subject to its other statutory criteria of achieving electoral equality, reflecting community identity and providing for effective and convenient local government.

Creating a Warding Pattern - Principles

- 2.2 Warding pattern submissions must adhere to the following criteria:
 - Delivering electoral equality for local voters – this means ensuring each local Councillor represents roughly the same number of people
 - Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities – this means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable
 - Promoting effective and convenient – this means ensuring that the new wards can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the pattern of wards reflects the electoral cycle of the council.

Electoral Arrangements of Town and Parish Councils

- 2.3 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, changes to external parish boundaries are the responsibility of local authorities.
- 2.4 The Commission can however recommend changes to the electoral arrangements within parish and town councils i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward. However, this is only in circumstances where the parished area is already or is to be divided between wards.
- 2.5 The Commission cannot, as part of this review, consider changes to the external boundaries of a parish, the number of parish/town councillors or to creating a new parish.

3. Cherwell District Council Warding Arrangements Submission

- 3.1 The Boundary Review Working Group worked primarily on the statutory criteria of equality of representation but also considered the other criteria of reflecting community interests and identities and providing for convenient and effective local government wherever possible.
- 3.2 The projected electorate for the whole district in 2020 (the date for which we are asked to make projections) is 123,835. This takes account of anticipated growth figures based on recent years growth and census data, approved planning applications and build rates. It does not take account of areas designated for development in the emerging Local Plan or where discussions on developments are underway but have not yet been through the planning process.
- 3.3 Given the Commission's preference for local authorities electing councillors by thirds to have three member wards, the Boundary Review Working Group applied the following formulae to its deliberations:
- Agreed number of councillors of 48 divided by 3 (desired number of members per ward) is 16.
 - Projected electorate of 123,835 divided by agreed number of councillors is 2580 giving a 1:2580 councillor:elector ratio
 - Therefore, each ward of 3 members should cover 7740 electors (with a tolerance of 10%)
- 3.4 Therefore the Council's Boundary Review Working Group has agreed that CDC submit a warding arrangement proposing 16 wards each comprising 3 members who will represent 7740 electors within a plus or minus 10% tolerance (6966 to 8514 electors)
- 5 Banbury wards
 - 4 Bicester wards
 - 2 Kidlington wards
 - 5 rural wards

- 3.5 The submission has unanimous support, with regard to the proposed warding pattern for the rural areas, Bicester and Kidlington with the only difference being the warding pattern for Banbury, which is primarily the division between the town centre area and Grimsbury and which area Hightown is included submission of the proposals for Banbury contained within this submission.

NB. The proposals for the Banbury warding arrangements by the Conservative Group and the Labour Group are attached to this draft submission for consideration by Council on 7 July 2014.

The Groups agree on the proposals for Banbury Hardwick, however have submitted different proposals for the remaining four Banbury wards.

- 3.6 As a consequence of the proposed CDC warding arrangements, to ensure the district ward boundaries are coterminous with Banbury Town Council, Bicester Town Council and Kidlington Parish Council, appendix 6 sets out proposals for the wards in these Town/Parish Councils.

NB. The proposals for Banbury Town Council are consequential on the decision of Council in relation to the CDC Banbury warding arrangements and will be added after consideration by Council on 7 July 2014.

4. **Proposed Warding Arrangements for Cherwell District Council (16 wards of 3 members)**

Banbury – 5 wards

Banbury has been treated separately to the surrounding parishes as electoral equality can be achieved without adding rural communities.

NB. The proposed Banbury warding arrangements will be inserted into this report following consideration and agreement by Council on 7 July 2014.

Bicester – 4 wards

Bicester East			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7774	2020 Electorate Variance	0%
Detail	This ward comprises the two Bicester Town Council – East Wards and two Bicester Town Council – Town wards to ensure the required electoral variance is achieved. As can be seen on the map, the ward follows key roads and natural boundaries.		

Bicester North

Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7371	2020 Electorate Variance	-5%
Detail	Bicester Town Council – North Ward boundaries have been respected in this proposed ward. Bicester is too large for three wards and too small for four wards without the addition of further electors. Given the planned developments in Caversfield and Bucknell which closely link the parishes with the north of Bicester it is proposed that these parishes be included in the Bicester North Ward.		

Bicester South			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	8148	2020 Electorate Variance	5%
Detail	This ward comprises the two Bicester Town Council – South East Wards, Chesterton Parish Council and the new houses at Kingsmere, which currently sit in the Bicester Town Council – South West ward. This achieves better electoral equality and uses the more natural boundary of Middleton Stoney Road. Given the location of Chesterton and proposed developments in the area, it is logical to include the parish in this ward.		

Bicester West			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7432	2020 Electorate Variance	-4%
Detail	This ward comprises two Bicester Town Council – West Wards, one Bicester Town Council – Town ward and the Bicester Town Council – South West ward, excluding the houses at Kingsmere which are included in the proposed Bicester South ward to ensure the required electoral variance is achieved. As can be seen on the map, the ward follows key roads and natural boundaries.		

Kidlington – 2 wards

Kidlington North

Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7700	2020 Electorate Variance	-1%
Detail	This ward comprises the St Mary's Ward and Roundham Ward of Kidlington Parish Council and brings in Begbroke parish and Yarnton parish.		

Kidlington South			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	8083	2020 Electorate Variance	+5%
Detail	<p>This ward comprises the Dogwood Ward, Exeter Ward and Orchard Ward of Kidlington Parish Council and brings in Gosford and Water Eaton parish.</p> <p>Gosford and Water Eaton is a separate parish despite it looking and feeling as though it is part of Kidlington and there are no natural boundaries between the two parishes. However, its needs and facilities are very much tied into Kidlington, for example, Gosford Hill School is the main secondary school for the majority of pupils in Kidlington and the bus service picks up on the Gosford side of Oxford Road going into Oxford and drops off on the Kidlington side. Many of the facilities in Kidlington are used by residents who live in Gosford and Water Eaton as well as Kidlington residents themselves.</p> <p>The community identity between the two villages is very strong and Gosford and Water Eaton and Kidlington have a shared common identity. Gosford and Water Eaton's need for services and representation have far more in common with the residents of Kidlington South than the residents of Kirtlington, Piddington and Horton cum Studley.</p>		

Rural Wards – 5 wards

The rural parts of Cherwell are divided into five wards each containing three members. Three are located in the northern half of the district and the remaining two are in the south. The River Cherwell and the Cherwell Valley Railway line have been used as a natural boundary between the wards.

Adderbury, Astons and Deddington	
Number of Members	Three

2020 Electorate Forecast	6724	2020 Electorate Variance	-14%
Detail	<p>This ward comprises the parishes of Adderbury, Barford St John & St Michael, Deddington, Duns Tew, Middle Aston, Milton, North Aston, South Newington and Steeple Aston.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the 2020 electorate variance is below the accepted tolerance and consideration was given to move the parish of Souldern from the Heyfords, Launton and Shelswell ward to this ward to achieve elector equality. However this would have meant straying over the natural boundary of the River Cherwell, which has been used to separate the rural Wards in the North from those in the South.</p> <p>There are areas within this ward which are allocated for development in the emerging Local Plan. However, as planning permissions have not been granted, these cannot be taken into consideration as part of the electorate figures.</p>		

Bloxham, Bodicote & Hook Norton			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7744	2020 Electorate Variance	0%
Detail	This ward comprises the parishes of Bloxham, Bodicote, Hook Norton, Milcombe and Wigginton.		

Cropredy, Sibfords and Wroxton			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7081	2020 Electorate Variance	-9%
Detail	<p>This ward comprises the parishes of Bourton, Broughton, Claydon with Clattercott, Cropredy, Drayton, Epwell, Hanwell, Horley, Hornton, Mollington, North Newington, Prescote, Shenington with Alkerton, Shutford, Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower, Swalcliffe, Tadmarton, Wardington and Wroxton.</p>		

Launton and Otmoor			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7158	2020 Electorate Variance	-8%

Detail	This ward comprises the parishes of Arncott, Blackthorn Launton, Piddington, Wendlebury, Bletchington, Charlton-on-Otmoor, Fencott and Murcott, Hampton Gay & Poyle, Horton-Cum-Studley, Islip, Merton, Noke, Oddington, Weston-on-the-Green, Shipton-on-Cherwell & Thrupp
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Shelswell, Heyfords and Kirtlington			
Number of Members	Three		
2020 Electorate Forecast	7358	2020 Electorate Variance	-5%
Detail	This ward comprises the parishes of Ardley with Fewcott, Cottisford, Finmere, Fringford, Fritwell, Godington, Hardwick with Tusmore, Hethe, Kirtlington, Lower Heyford, Middleton Stoney, Mixbury, Newton Purcell with Shelswell, Somerton, Souldern, Stoke Lyne, Stratton Audley, and Upper Heyford.		

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