

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Special Full Council – 23 August, 2018

### Warding Arrangements for the New Council

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor J Warmington, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership

Report Author : Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

#### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 One of the important steps to be taken to prepare for the establishment of the new Council is for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to undertake an Electoral Review of the area. This process has reached the stage of the LGBCE producing their draft recommendations for the warding pattern for the new Council based on a size of 59 Councillors and comments are being sought by way of a public consultation process that is running until 27 August, 2018.
- 1.2 The LGBCE are seeking proposals for alternative boundaries or ward names which would still meet with their criteria and this report provides the Council with the opportunity of considering whether to make any such comments and, if so, what they should be.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Council considers submitting representations to the LGBCE as a response to their public consultation process in regard to their draft recommendations for the proposed warding arrangements for the new Council as set out in Appendix A, with or without amendments.

#### 3. Risk Assessment Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
To not make comments at this stage would be a missed opportunity to shape the final recommendations from the LGBCE to best reflect local considerations	5	4	20
<i>To put forward any agreed representations to influence the LGBCE to produce final recommendations that best reflect local considerations</i>	2	4	8

### Risk Scoring Matrix

<b>Likelihood</b>	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

#### 4. Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 Following the decision of the Secretary of State to confirm his 'minded to' decision to create a new Council, it is necessary for the LGBCE to establish the electoral arrangements in time for the May 2019 local elections. As Members will recall, the Structural Change Order that was approved by Parliament made provision for the size of the new Council to be 58 councillors. The LGBCE therefore invited interested parties to submit any proposals to them in regard to establishing warding arrangements for the new Council area based on a size of 58. The output from this process would be to determine the number of wards, the ward boundaries, the number of Councillors to be elected to each ward and the names of each ward. All such proposals were requested to be submitted to the LGBCE by 4 May, 2018 and both Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils took the opportunity of doing so.
- 4.2 On 3 July, 2018, the LGBCE published their draft recommendations for the new electoral arrangements for Somerset West and Taunton Council – an overview of the proposals are attached as Appendix B to this report. The LGBCE are proposing that the new Council should have 59 Councillors who should represent 6 three-Councillor wards, 12 two-Councillor wards and 17 one-Councillor wards. These proposals are subject to a full public consultation process which runs until 27 August, 2018 and views are being sought for alternative boundaries or ward names which meet the LGBCE criteria – Electoral Equality, Community Identity and Effective local government – which they must follow as part of the electoral review process.

- 4.3 The draft recommendations do closely reflect the proposals submitted by the two Councils with the main difference being the LGBCE exercising their discretion to increase the size of the new Council from 58 to 59 Members to provide better electoral equality; this is being done by the allocation of one additional Councillor to the unparished area of Taunton (from 15 to 16) with the recommendations for the rest of the area reflecting the Councils' submissions with the two exceptions of the Parish of Sampford Brett being placed with Williton and Watchet (rather than in South Quantock) and the Parish of Treborough being part of the Exmoor Ward (rather than the Old Cleeve and District Ward).
- 4.4 In terms of process, the New Council Working Group established a cross party sub-group to assist officers with reviewing the draft recommendations and formulating a draft response for the two Councils to consider endorsing at Special Meetings to be held on 20 August (West Somerset Council) and 23 August (Taunton Deane Borough Council), 2018, respectively.
- 4.5 The sub-group met with officers on 6 August, 2018 and reviewed the draft recommendations, particularly focussing on where there were changes from the submission made on behalf of the two Councils. Overall, the sub group recognised that the recommendations broadly reflected the wishes of the two Councils and incorporated some of the suggestions made by town and parish councils and therefore should be welcomed in this regard.
- 4.6 It was further acknowledged that by the LGBCE allocating an additional seat to the unparished area of Taunton, this had the dual benefit of enhancing the local democratic representation for this part of the new Council area and providing a better overall electoral equality whilst not prejudicing and altering significantly the distribution of seats across the rest of the area as proposed in the Councils' original submissions.
- 4.7 The sub-group did identify a number of matters that it considered should be put forward to the LGBCE to consider addressing to further enhance their final recommendations. These related to the moving of one property between wards in the unparished area of Taunton to align better with the proposed warding pattern, suggesting some changes to the proposed names of some of the new Council wards and to request that the warding schemes for Minehead and Wellington Town Councils are coterminous with the proposed wards for the new district Council and that the names are the same as well. These points are listed in full in Appendix A to this report.
- 4.8 The sub-group were strongly of the view that, if at all possible, it would add weight to any representations made by the two Councils if those representations were the same and so it was agreed that identical reports would be submitted to the two respective meetings for consideration.

## **5. Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 Now the Secretary of State has agreed, with Parliamentary approval, to proceed with the establishment of a new Council to be constituted with effect from 1 April, 2108, one of the tasks to be undertaken is for the LGBCE to complete an electoral review to determine

the electoral arrangements to take effect at the May 2019 local elections. This report provides the Council with a further opportunity to influence the LGBCE as they undertake their formal process.

## **6. Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report other than officer and member time taken on considering and formulating options for the making of any representations in response to the LGBCE draft recommendations relating to warding arrangements for the new Council.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The Secretary of State has set in train the parliamentary process required to bring the new Council into effect using the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 as the primary legislation.
- 7.2 The electoral review to be undertaken by the LGBCE will be undertaken in accordance with Section 56 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act, 2009 and under sub section 56(9) the Council is required to provide such information as is required by the LGBCE.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications**

- 8.1 None in respect of this report.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety**

- 9.1 None in respect of this report.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 10.1 Whilst the report is not directly addressing eliminating discrimination relating to the protected characteristics, the aim of delivering electoral equality is laudable in terms of perceived fairness from a public perspective.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

- 11.1 None in respect of this report.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

- 12.1 None in respect of this report.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 None in respect of this report.

## **14 Asset Management**

14.1 None in respect of this report.

## 15 Data Protection Implications

15.1 None in respect of this report.

## 16 Consultation Implications

16.1 All members of both Councils were directly asked for their views as were all Parish and Town Councils and community groups associated with the unparished area of Taunton. Meetings with the main political Groups and Member drop-ins at both The Deane House and West Somerset House were held and the LGBCE provided a members briefing before the Council made its submission prior to the formal LGBCE process.

16.2 The Council is now considering whether to make representations in respect of the LGBCE draft recommendations as part of this formal process.

### Democratic Path:

- **Electoral Review Sub Group of New Council Working Group - Yes**
- **Full Council – Yes**

Reporting Frequency:  **Once only**       **Ad-hoc**     **Quarterly**  
 **Twice-yearly**       **Annually**

### List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix A	Proposed Council Representations in respect of the LGBCE Draft Recommendations on the Warding Arrangements for the Somerset West and Taunton Council.
Appendix B	Overview of the LGBCE Draft Recommendations for the Warding Arrangements for the Somerset West and Taunton Council

### Contact Officer

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Email	bdlang@westsomerset.gov.uk

**Proposed Council Representations in respect of the LGBCE Draft  
Recommendations on the Warding Arrangements for the Somerset West and  
Taunton Council**

1. The Council broadly support the draft recommendations and welcome the proposals including the increase in the number of councillors to 59 to allow 16 councillors to represent the unparished area of Taunton.
2. The Council supports the proposed new Council district ward boundaries with the one specific suggested amendment so that the ward boundary for the Wellsprings and Rowbarton Ward be slightly adjusted to enable the property known as 191 Cheddon Road to be moved from this ward and included in the proposed Priorswood Ward – as highlighted on the map at Appendix C.
3. The Council request that the following proposed Ward names be changed as set out below:

The proposed Ward name of 'Tangier' be changed to 'Manor and Tangier'

The proposed Ward name of 'Vivary West' be changed to 'Wilton and Sherford'

The proposed Ward name of 'Vivary East ' be changed to 'Vivary'

The proposed Ward name of 'Minehead South' be changed to 'Periton and Woodcombe'

4. The Council strongly requests that the proposed Minehead Town Council warding arrangements as set out in paragraph 80 of the recommendations be changed to ensure that the town council wards are coterminous with those proposed for the district council in Minehead (given that elections for the town and district councils are usually held at the same time) as set out in paragraphs 68, 69 and 70 of the recommendations, with the names being the same for both the district and town council wards to avoid confusion.
5. The Council strongly requests that the proposed Wellington Town Council warding arrangements as set out in paragraph 81 of the recommendations be changed to ensure that the town council wards are coterminous with those proposed for the district council in Wellington (given that elections for the town and district councils are usually held at the same time) as set out in paragraphs 57, 58 and 59 of the recommendations, with the names being the same for both the district and town council wards to avoid confusion.



## Summary of our recommendations

Our draft recommendations propose that Somerset West and Taunton Council should have **59 councillors**.

Those councillors should represent 6 three-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and 17 one-councillor wards, across the council area.

Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the new council – these have been decided by Parliament and we cannot amend them.

An outline of the proposals is shown in the map to the right. A detailed report on the recommendations and interactive mapping is available on our website at: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk).

We welcome comments on our draft recommendations, whether you support the proposals or wish to put forward alternative arrangements.

In particular, we welcome proposals for alternative boundaries or ward names which meet the criteria we must follow as part of electoral reviews and which are described in more detail over the page.

Have your say at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk):

- view the map of our recommendations down to street level.
- draw your own boundaries online.
- zoom into the areas that interest you most.
- find more guidance on how to have your say.
- read the full report of our recommendations.
- send us your views directly.

Stage of review	Description
3 July - 27 August 2018	Public consultation on draft recommendations
23 October 2018	Publication of final recommendations
May 2019	Subject to parliamentary approval - implementation of new arrangements at local elections

# Overview of draft recommendations for Somerset West and Taunton Council

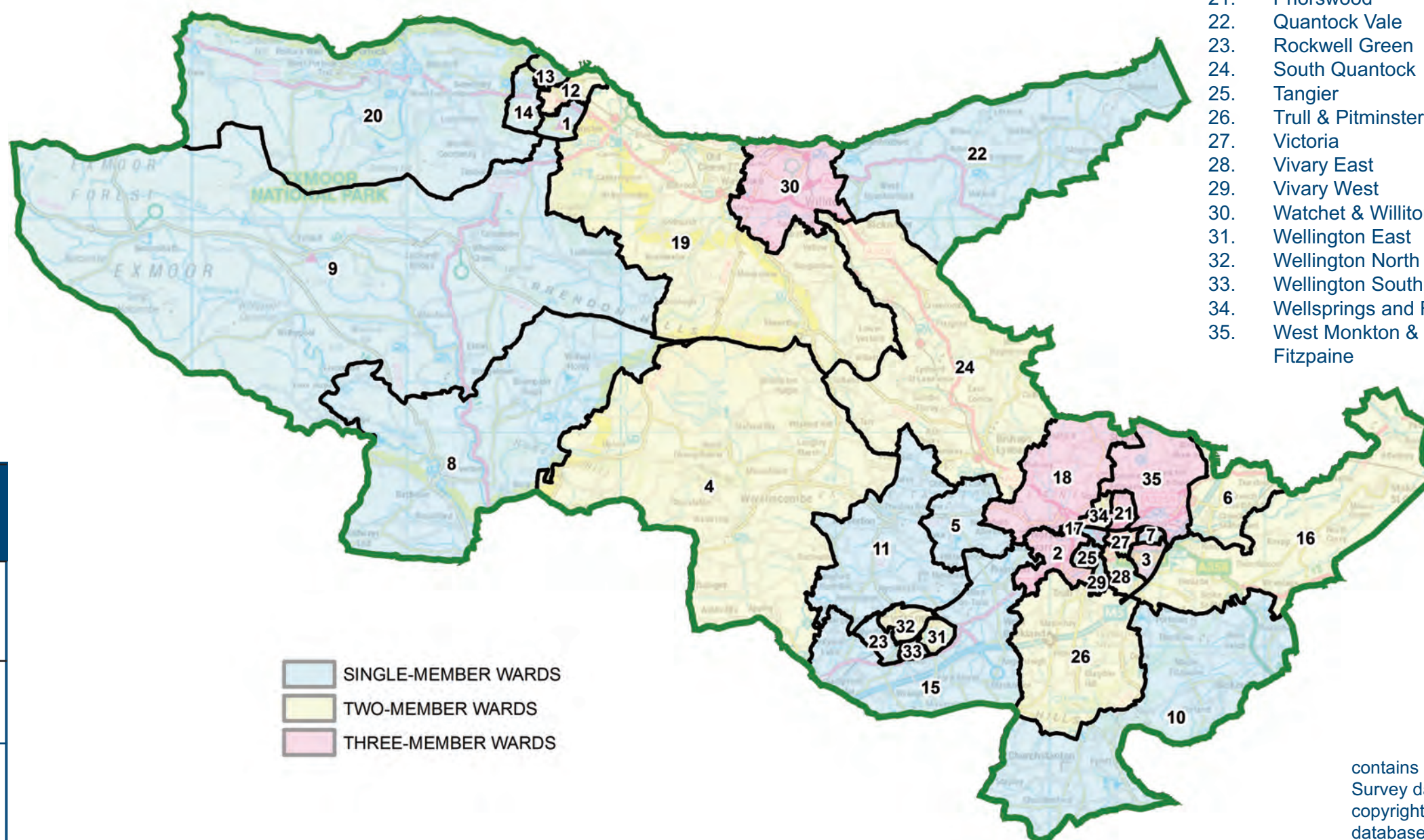
View this map online and draw your own boundaries: [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

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

If you are viewing this page online, click on the map to go straight to our interactive consultation area.

## Key: APPENDIX B

1. Alcombe
2. Bishop's Hull & Comeytrove
3. Blackbrook & Holway
4. Brendons & Wiveliscombe
5. Cotford St Luke & Oake
6. Creech & Durston
7. Creechbarrow
8. Dulverton & District
9. Exmoor
10. Hatch & Blackdown
11. Milverton & District
12. Minehead Central
13. Minehead North
14. Minehead South
15. Monument
16. North Curry & District
17. North Town
18. Norton Fitzwarren & Staplegrove
19. Old Cleeve & District
20. Porlock & District
21. Priorswood
22. Quantock Vale
23. Rockwell Green
24. South Quantock
25. Tangier
26. Trull & Pitminster
27. Victoria
28. Vivary East
29. Vivary West
30. Watchet & Williton
31. Wellington East
32. Wellington North
33. Wellington South
34. Wellsprings and Rowbarton
35. West Monkton & Cheddon Fitzpaine



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## Have your say:

We are now consulting local people on a new pattern of wards for Somerset West and Taunton. We have an open mind about our final recommendations, and we will consider every piece of evidence we receive from local groups and people, regardless of whom it is from or whether it relates to the whole area or just a part of it.

If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Somerset West and Taunton, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

# Somerset West and Taunton Council

## Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements

We aim to propose a pattern of wards for Somerset West and Taunton Council which delivers:

- **Electoral equality:** each councillor represents a similar number of voters.
- **Community identity:** reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- **Effective and convenient local government:** helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

### A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

- **Facilities:** does your pattern of wards reflect where local people go for shops, medical services, leisure facilities etc?
- **Interests:** what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- **Identifiable boundaries:** are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

### Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?

### Useful tips:

- Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk).
- We publish all submissions we receive on our website. Go to: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

### Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

### Community identity:

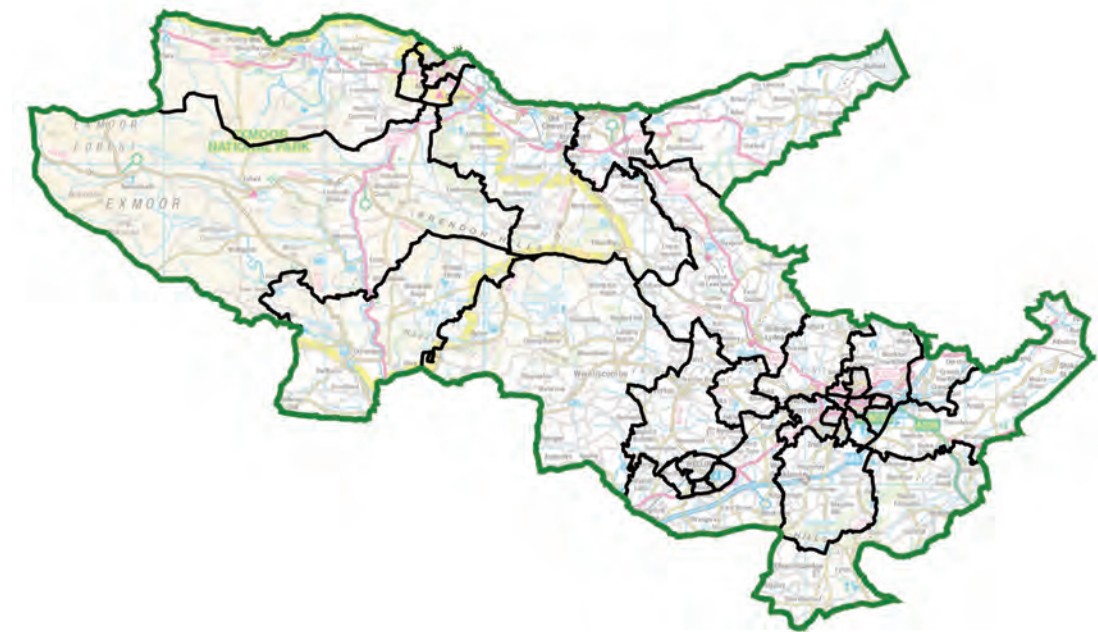
- **Transport links:** are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?
- **Community groups:** is there a parish council, residents association or another group that represents the area?

### Write to:

Review Officer (Somerset West and Taunton)  
LGBCE  
1st Floor, Windsor House  
50 Victoria Street, London  
SW1H 0TL

### Our consultation area:

[consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)  
Email:  
[reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk)  
Twitter:  
@LGBCE



### Who we are:

- The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament.
- We are not part of government or any political party.
- We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.
- Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

### Electoral review:

- An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority, including:
- The total number of councillors representing the council's voters ('council size').
  - The names, number and boundaries of wards or electoral divisions.
  - The number of councillors for each ward or division.

### Why Somerset West and Taunton?

- In May 2018, the government decided to create a new local authority called Somerset West and Taunton Council.
- This council consists of the former West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council.
- The Commission agreed to carry out an electoral review to draw up new wards for the new council.

### Our proposals:

- We propose that the council should have **59 councillors** in future, representing 6 three-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and 17 one-councillor wards across the council area.

**You have until 27 August 2018 to have your say on the recommendations**



