
ELECTORAL REVIEW OF ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Electoral Review Working Group (“Working Group”) and makes various recommendations to Full Council on proposed ward boundaries and other related matters.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Last year, The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“LGBCE”) decided to undertake a review of the Council’s electoral arrangements due to certain statutory thresholds being triggered (namely 6 existing wards being over or under represented by more than 10%). The electoral review focusses on:
- (a) Council Size, namely the number of Councillors representing electors in the district;
 - (b) New warding arrangements; and
 - (c) The names of those wards.
- 2.2 The cross party Working Group was set up by Council on 28 January 2014 with the purpose of making recommendations to Full Council in relation to the electoral review of the district.
- 2.3 Having recently dealt with the issue of Council Size (see 3 below) the Electoral Review is currently in the stage 1 consultation phase which is concerned with new warding arrangements. The Council is required to submit its proposals on ward patterns to the LGBCE by 29 September 2014. The LGBCE will then consider all of the responses received and will issue draft recommendations on ward patterns on 9 December 2014. Those draft recommendations will then be the subject of a stage 2 consultation which will close on 16 February 2015. Ultimately, the LGBCE and Parliament has the final decision on the district’s new warding patterns.

3 COUNCIL SIZE

- 3.1 On 15 April 2014 Full Council agreed the recommendation from the Working Group to propose to the LGBCE that the Council size remains at 39 Councillors. On 22 July 2014, the LGBCE formally confirmed they were minded to recommend this number.
- 3.2 LGBCE guidance therefore requires (unless there is evidence to say otherwise) that the Council proposes 13 new wards of 3 Members, given that the Council operates elections by thirds.

4 NEW WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 In order to stand the test of time, any new ward proposals must take into account future population growth factors in accordance with LGBCE guidance. To do otherwise would result in wards quickly growing in elector numbers and thus potentially triggering a further review.
- 4.2 In order to predict future population growth the Council was required to submit a population forecast report, which has been accepted by the LGBCE. This takes into account future development which according to LGBCE guidance, is very likely to be occupied within the next 6 years.
- 4.3 The Council's population forecast predicts an electorate of 70,792 in 2020 (an increase of over 4,000 electors from the current electorate of 66,625). This equates to 13 wards of 5445 electorate. One of the Council's objectives is therefore to propose wards which are within 10% tolerance of 5445 electors. This would satisfy the first LGBCE criterion of "electoral equality" which is concerned with ensuring electors have equal access to elected representatives. The second criterion the LGBCE will consider in any proposal is "community identity". New ward patterns should reflect community identity and where possible avoid the splitting of established communities. It is however, acceptable to have 2 or more distinct communities within a ward. The third criterion is "effective and convenient local government" which is concerned with ensuring Councillors are able to provide effective representation within a ward.
- 4.4 The attached proposed warding plan (appendix 2) and supporting document (appendix 1) show the recommended new ward boundary lines and variances from 5445 for each ward. Members will note that the proposal achieves good levels of variance (i.e. as close as possible to 5445) which allows some degree of flexibility in the event of unforeseen population growth/movement. The supporting document (appendix 1) provides Members with further detail and rationale for the proposals.
- 4.5 The Working Group was very keen to follow, so far as was practicable, Parish Boundary lines when drawing up new district wards. This has the distinct advantage of maintaining existing and well established community identities. It also minimises the number of splits to Parish areas (i.e. where a district ward boundary cuts through a Parish) which would necessitate the LGBCE warding/re-warding that Parish. In any event, splits to Parish areas which result in a Parish ward containing 100 or less electors would be rejected by the LGBCE. The Parishes were invited to a presentation by the LGBCE on 5 August 2014 and had the opportunity to ask questions about the review process. Further publicity and information have also been provided by the LGBCE and supported by the Council. Parishes and the public alike are welcome to submit proposals on ward patterns directly to the LGBCE.

- 4.6 Given the unique geography and concentrations of populations within the district it was to some extent inevitable that some wards would be much larger than others. This is clearly the case in proposed ward 2.
- 4.7 Given its size, the Working Group have suggested that in the alternative, consideration is given to splitting ward 2 into 1 and 2 Member wards, rather than a single 3 member ward. Concerns were raised with respect to meeting the criterion of “effective and convenient local government” if proposing a single, large ward. This would include the day to day practicalities of a Councillor being able to effectively represent that entire ward.
- 4.8 Council’s view is therefore sought as to whether ward 2 is recommended to the LGBCE as a single 3 Member ward or split as a 1 and 2 Member ward. Were the ward to be split, the proposal plan indicates the position of the dividing line. The supporting document (appendix 1) also sets out the electorate figures for the 2 options.

5 NAMING OF THE PROPOSED WARDS

- 5.1 As part of its consultation submission, the Council is required to propose names for its new ward boundaries. LGBCE guidance requires that ward names are kept relatively short (rather than exhaustive), distinct and easily identifiable to encapsulate that ward. The following have been suggested by the Working Group:

Ward 1 – Foulness and the Wakerings / Foulness and Wakering

Ward 2 – Rochford Rural / Rochford East

(If split, Ward 2a – Sutton, 2b- Rochford Rural / Rochford East)

Ward 3 – Rochford Central / Rochford West

Ward 4 – Hawkwell East

Ward 5 – Hawkwell West

Ward 6 – Hockley and Ashingdon

Ward 7 - Hockley

Ward 8 – Hullbridge

Ward 9 – Downhall and Rawreth

Ward 10 – Rayleigh West / Sweyne Park and Grange

Ward 11 – King George

Ward 12 – Trinity

Ward 13 – Rayleigh East

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are resource implications for the Council in terms of Officer time in producing the necessary information for the LGBCE.

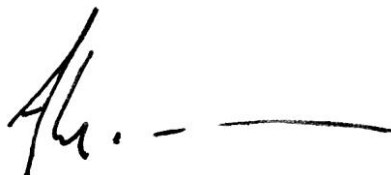
5 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As already referred to in this report, the Parishes may be affected by the resultant changes to district warding patterns. Although the proposed wards follow Parish boundaries where at all possible, there have inevitably been a number of splits to Parish wards due to the requirement to achieve electoral equality (electoral figures close to an electorate of 5445). In such instances, the LGBCE will ward or re-ward the Parish to take account of that split. It is important to note that the actual boundaries of the Parishes will not change.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

- (1) To approve the proposed warding patterns as shown on the attached plan to this report as forming the Council's stage 1 consultation response to the LGBCE;
- (2) To determine whether ward 2 is proposed to the LGBCE as:
 - (i) a single, 3 Member ward or
 - (ii) as a split 1 and 2 Member ward;
- (3) To determine the ward names to be proposed to the LGBCE; and
- (4) To delegate to officers (in consultation with the Working Group) the finalising of the background report to include where necessary further information and evidence to support the Council's proposal to the LGBCE.



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Background Papers:-

None.

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Rochford District Council – Proposed New Wards and Supporting Information

Based upon 39 Councillors, with a 2020 forecasted overall electorate of 70,792.

By using a uniform pattern of 3-Member wards across the District this equates to 13 proposed wards working towards an average electorate of 5,445 in each. However, as an exception to this, ward no.2 shows an alternative pattern if Members wish to pursue a split in this area.

Introduction

This proposal seeks where possible to retain parish boundaries when creating the new wards, acknowledging that Parish boundaries reflect communities.

However due to the population make up of the District, it has been necessary to join parts of some parishes with adjoining rural areas, namely Rochford and the east of the District, the east of Hockley and Ashingdon, and part of Rayleigh with Rawreth.

There has been minor splits to Ashingdon (287 electors) and Barling (763 electors) parishes that have been necessary to help the plan fit together, however these have involved smaller numbers.

However, the following parishes have their parish boundaries unaffected by the creation of the new wards: Foulness, Great Wakering, Sutton, Stambridge, Canewdon, Hawkwell and Hullbridge.

A tabled summary is shown on the next page and details of which follow to support.

Proposed Ward (Name to be agreed by Council)	Forecast Electorate by 2020	Variance (%) from District Average of 1,815 per Cllr
1.	5,700	+ 4.68
2.	5,217	- 4.09
2 a). 1 Member	1,822	+ 4.7 (of total 5,217 area average(1,739))
2 b). 2 Member	3,395	- 2.3 (of total 5,217 area average (1,739))
3.	5,543	+ 1.80
4.	5,367	- 1.43
5.	5,120	- 5.97
6.	5,489	+ 8.0
7.	5,235	- 3.86
8.	5,627	+ 3.34
9.	5,483	+ 0.69
10.	5,319	- 2.31
11.	5,763	+ 5.52
12.	5,361	- 1.54
13.	5,568	+ 2.26

Note: numbering of wards is for the purpose of cross reference with area on map.

Proposed Ward (Name to be agreed by Council)	Forecast Electorate by 2020	Electoral Variance (%) from District Average	Supporting Information
1.	5,700	+ 4.68	<p>Foulness Island Parish (RCA): 136 Great Wakering Parish (RCB, RCC and RCD): 4,801 Part of Barling Magna Parish (RCF) (1,362 total): <u>763*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foulness & Great Wakering ward (RCA/RCB/RCC/RCD) is currently under average @ 4,937 (-9.33%) so <i>we need to increase the electorate.</i> • Pulling in the Barling Magna Parish neighbour (RCF) is too much as this is 1,362 (so would equal a combined total of 6,299 (+15.68%). • A new suggested western boundary to ward 1 would split Barling & Sutton (through Barling Magna Parish) to incorporate Potten Island and Little Wakering, with a natural divide following the creek coming down through Little Wakering Road, which adds an electorate of 763*. • Strong community ties between Little Wakering and Great Wakering in terms of location and amenities itself. • By keeping the top part of Little Wakering Road separate this keeps the Barling area together and encompasses Barling school and other landmarks for Barling. • Bluehouse and Stonebridge farms are considered to be more within the Barling area also (south-west corner) and Barling seems to blend well into Sutton in terms of putting this together in another ward.

2.	5,217	-4.09	<p>Canewdon Parish (RCL): 1,190 Stambridge Parish (RCP): 787 Sutton Parish (RCG): 112 Paglesham Parish (RCN and RCO): 202 Part of Barling Magna Parish (RCF) (1,362 total): <u>599</u> Rochford Eastwood Parish Ward(RCQ): 1,417 Part of Rochford Roche Parish ward (RCR) (2,508 total): <u>910</u> – including; Millview Meadows 103, East Street 110, Townfield 8, Mornington 111, Stambridge 280, Lingfield 99 Russell 28, Coombes 72 & South Street 37.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is necessary for Rochford Parish to be split due to its large population compared with the adjoining rural areas. <p><i>As this area geographically is very large in size, there could be potential merit in splitting this area into 2 separate wards so that 2a) is a 1 Member ward and 2b) is a 2 Member ward. Splitting the 5,217 for this ward into 3 = 1,739 per member.</i></p> <p><i>Following Members views of splitting along the River Roach to divide RCQ and part of RCR by continuing down to pass south of Sutton Road, we would have the following figures:-</i></p> <p><u><i>2a) Rochford South, Sutton and West Barling Total: 1,822 (+ 4.7%)</i></u></p> <p><i>Part of Barling Parish (RCF) (1,362 total): 599 Sutton Parish (RCG): 112 Rochford Eastwood Parish ward (RCQ) (1,417 total): <u>1,111</u> - not including; Sutton Road 151, Rochford Hall Road 40, The Ridings 43, Tinkers Lane 2, & Southend Road north of Sutton Road 70.</i></p>
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			<p><u>2b) Rochford East, Canewdon, Stambridge and Paglesham Total: 3,395 (-2.3%)</u></p> <p>Canewdon Parish: 1,190 Stambridge Parish: 787 Paglesham: 202 Rochford Roche (RCR) 910: Rochford Eastwood (RCQ) (1,417 total): <u>306</u> – including; Sutton Road 151, Rochford Hall Road 40, The Ridings 43, Tinkers Lane 2, & Southend Road north of Sutton Road 70</p>
3.	5,543	+ 1.80	<p>Rochford St Andrews Parish ward (RCT): 2,119 Rochford St Andrews Parish ward (RCS): 1,169 Rochford North Parish ward (RCX): 657</p> <p>Remainder of Rochford Roche Parish ward (RCR) (2,508 total): <u>1,598</u> – not including; Millview Meadows 103, East Street 110, Townfield 8, Mornington 111, Stambridge 280, Lingfield 99 Russell 28, Coombes 72 & South Street 37.</p>
4.	5,367	-1.43	<p>Part of Hawkwell North Parish ward (RCV) (2,373 total) : <u>1,377</u> – not including; Rectory Avenue 315, Hogarth 63, Reynolds 42, Magnolia 38, Lincoln 12, Durham 16, Avon 47 Dorset 86, Devon 65, Rectory Road (to Harewood) 42, Lascelles (to Harewood, split to east of no.42a) 50, Princess west of Harewood 124, Central west of Harewood 32, & LH side of Harewood 64.</p> <p>Hawkwell North Parish ward (RCU): 1,034 Ashingdon Heights Parish ward (RCU2): 287</p>

			<p>Part of Hawkwell South Parish ward (RCW) (2,897 total): <u>2,669</u> – not including; Hainault 47, Oaklands 43, Wendon 7, Braxted 23, Westbury 96 & Eastbury (short stub to west of main section) 12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCU2 has been included to bring the numbers up and because of road connections i.e. being 'land locked'.
5.	5,120	- 5.97	<p>Hawkwell West Parish ward (RCY): 3,896</p> <p>Part of Hawkwell North Parish ward (RCV) (2,373 total): <u>996</u> – including; Rectory Avenue 315, Hogarth 63, Reynolds 42, Magnolia 38, Lincoln 12, Durham 16, Avon 47 Dorset 86, Devon 65, Rectory Road (to Harewood) 42, Lascelles (to Harewood, split to east of no.42a) 50, Princess west of Harewood 124, Central west of Harewood 32 & LH side of Harewood 64.</p> <p>Part of Hawkwell South Parish ward RCW (2,897 total): <u>228</u> – including; Hainault 47, Oaklands 43, Wendon 7, Braxted 23, Westbury 96 & Eastbury (short stub to west of main section) 12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Splitting Hawkwell on a East West basis returns the parish to its position previous to the last District ward boundaries review in 2001/2002.
6.	5,489	+ 8.0	<p>Ashingdon Parish (2,968 total) minus RCU2 287 in ward 4. = (RCH, RCK, RDA2 & RDB2): <u>2,681</u></p> <p>Hockley North (RDB): 1,227</p> <p>Part of Hockley Central (RDA) (2,270 total): <u>960</u> - East of Greensward Lane.</p> <p>Part of Hockley Central (RDA) (2,270 total): <u>621</u> - West of Greensward</p>

			<p>Lane, including; Graham Close 30, Hamilton Gardens 140, Selbourne 29, Rosslyn Close 91, Rosslyn Road 67, Oak Walk 96, Cornhill Avenue 144, & Western side of Greensward Lane to Hamilton Gardens 24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst it may be considered that Hockley and Hawkwell fit together, it is felt that there are stronger community ties between the east of Hockley and Ashingdon, for example, the current RDA2 and RDB2 Polling Districts are in the current Hockley North District ward, but are in the Ashingdon Parish, and that Ashingdon School serves as a feeder school to Greensward Academy. • East of Greensward Lane of RDA and RDA2 makes up the Broadlands Estate, which is felt is one community and should be kept together within a ward.
7.	5,235	- 3.86	<p>Hockley West (RDC): 1,787 Hockley Central (RCZ): 2,759</p> <p>Remainder of Hockley Central (RDA) (2,270 total): <u>689</u> West of Greensward Lane, including; Plumberbow Avenue: 222, The Acrons 25, Wimhurst Close 14, Mount Avenue 41, Mount Crescent 81, Marylands 114, Merryfields 86, Clayspring 21 & Western side of Greensward Lane (Hamilton Gardens to Station) 85.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hockley Parish is required to be split due to its large population, which is forecast with an electorate of 8,042 for 2020.

8.	5,627	+ 3.34	<p>Hullbridge Parish (RDD, RDE & RDF): 5,627</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Boundaries are retained for Hullbridge. This area is also the current Hullbridge district ward.
9.	5,483	+ 0.69	<p>Rayleigh Downhall Parish ward (RDH): 3,049 Rawreth Parish (RDJ): 1,085</p> <p>Part of Rayleigh Sweyne Park (RDO) (1,752 total): <u>1,227</u> - not including; Stirling Close 73, Arundel Gardens 34, Victoria Avenue (up to Cheapside West) 72, Edinburgh Close 33, Cheapside West (east from victoria avenue) 68, Wimarc Crescent 38, Vernon Avenue 77, Pearsons Avenue 82 & Sir Walter Raleigh Drive 48.</p> <p>Part of Rayleigh Grange (RDK2) (969 total): <u>122</u> - including; Preston Gardens 14, Hedgehope Avenue 26, Downhall Road (north of Down hall Close) 35 & Downhall Close 47.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This links part of the Rayleigh town area and the Rawreth Parish. Downhall & Rawreth ward (RDH & RDJ) is under the district forecasted average for 2020 @ 4,134 (-24.08%) so we need to increase the electorate. Using all of a single current ward neighbour would have been too much and taken the electorate further away from the district average.

10.	5,319	- 2.31	<p>Rayleigh Swayne Park (RDN): 1,931</p> <p>Part of Rayleigh Swayne Park (RDO) (1,752 total): <u>525</u> – including; Stirling Close(73), Arundel Gardens(34), Victoria Avenue (up to Cheapside West)(72), Edinburgh Close(33), Cheapside West (east from victoria avenue)(68), Wimarc Crescent(38), Vernon Avenue(77), Pearsons Avenue(82) & Sir Walter Raleigh Drive(48).</p> <p>Part of Rayleigh Grange (RDK2) (969 total): <u>847</u> - not including; Preston Gardens 14, Hedgehope Avenue 26, Downhall Road (north of Down hall Close) 35 & Downhall Close 47.</p> <p>Rayleigh Grange (RDK): 2,016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These areas sit well together and this ward would retain existing ward boundaries to the east and south. • The split of RDO forms the new northern boundary.
11.	5,763	+ 5.52	<p>Rayleigh Wheatley (RDQ 1,859 & RDR 1,555): 3,414</p> <p>Rayleigh Whitehouse (RDT): 1,964</p> <p>Part of Rayleigh Central (RDG) (3,448 total): <u>385</u> – including; Queens Road 149, Kings Road 90, Kings Close 21, Parklands 36 & Broad Oak Way 89.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This merges the Western half of the present Whitehouse ward with the Wheatley ward. Existing boundaries would remain to the south.

12.	5,361	- 1.54	<p>Part of Rayleigh Central (RDG (3,448 total): <u>2,386</u> - not including; The Chase up to Warwick Road, Leslie Road to the Chase, Poplar Road, The Laurels, The Limes, Essex Close, Eastwood Road (north side) (from The Chase to The Laurels), Hawthorn Way, Worcester Drive, Cedar Close, Leslie Gardens, Queens Road 149, Kings Road 90, Kings Close 21, Parklands 36 & Broad Oak Way 89.</p> <p>Rayleigh Trinity (RDP): 2,975</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some existing wards needed to be split in this Rayleigh area as left on their own they are not enough electorate but put entirely with a neighbour are too much (e.g Rayleigh Central (RDG) is 3,448, Trinity (RDP) = 2975 & Whitehouse (RDT/RDS) = 3,474). This ward merges the central and Northern Sections of the current Rayleigh Central ward with the current Trinity Ward.
13.	5,568	+ 2.26	<p>Remainder of Rayleigh Central (RDG) (3,448 total): <u>677</u> – including; The Chase up to Warwick Road, Leslie Road to the Chase, Poplar Road, The Laurels, The Limes, Essex Close, Hawthorn Way, Worcester Drive, Cedar Close, Leslie Gardens & Eastwood Road (north side) (from The Chase to The Laurels).</p> <p>Rayleigh Whitehouse (RDS): 1,510</p> <p>Rayleigh Lodge (RDL 1,809 & RDM 1,572): 3,381</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some existing wards needed to be split in this Rayleigh area as left on their own they are not enough electorate but put entirely with a neighbour

			<p>are too much (e.g. Rayleigh Whitehouse (RDS/RDT) is 3,473 and Lodge RDM/RDL = 3,382) .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This ward allows for Whitehouse to be split East and West, with the East section now joining with the whole of Lodge, and the south eastern section of the current Rayleigh Central Ward.
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