

Appendix A – Draft Response to Electoral Review

The council welcomes the draft proposals report from the Commission and is pleased to see that much of the proposals contained in the Councils own scheme submitted as part of the consultation exercise for the review are reflected in the draft proposals. For all other wards not specifically mentioned below, the Council wish to support the proposals put forward by the Commission and are pleased to see a continuation of single member wards as a preference for the area.

The councils working group met to consider the draft proposals, as well as this response being considered at a meeting a full council on the 14th January 2021. The Council wish to pass on the below observations for consideration in drafting the final proposals for the review.

Chepstow Area

The Council noted the single member wards proposed by the Commission for the Chepstow area compared to the multi member wards included in the Councils own scheme. Multi-member wards were proposed for Chepstow due to the future electorate forecast for the Chepstow Castle ward meaning proposals for single member wards would not fall within the criteria the Commission set out for the review.

The working group received detailed alternative proposals from the County Councillors for the Thornwell and St Christophers wards which the individual members will submit to the Commission as an alternative proposal for the area. Their proposal would require changes to the County and Community boundaries with Thornwell extending to include the Western Avenue area within its ward and the northern Bulwark boundary extended to follow Mathern Road and incorporate Bulwark school and shops within the Bulwark ward. The Council support the proposals contained in the individual member responses should the Commission wish to retain these wards as single member wards. If the Commission are not minded to change the boundaries as detailed in the Councillors proposals the Council consider a multi-member ward the most suitable option for Thornwell and Bulwark wards as proposed in its original scheme.

Magor with Undy

The Commission has proposed a single member Magor West ward and a dual member Magor East and Undy ward. The Council understand that the exception in Chepstow has been made due to the forecast electorate taking effect at a later date so the current arrangements only require a single councillor. The electorate forecast for the Magor East ward is similar to that of Chepstow Castle but an exception hasn't been made in this ward. Additionally, the current level of electorates across all three wards are consistent at their current level and provide parity in terms of representation. The Council would wish to see single member wards retained where possible and suggest that the consideration of the impact on future electorate be considered at the next electoral review when the variance in electorates across the wards will have taken effect.

Govilon & Llanfoist / Llanbadoc & Usk

The Council notes the proposals for the above two areas to become multimember wards. Whilst the Council would ideally prefer to see single member wards where possible it accepts the need to multimember these two areas given the variation in electorates for the adjoining wards being significantly under or above the desired electorate level and that merging the two areas together provides a more equal level of representation.

Mitchel Troy

The Council supports the proposal put forward by the Commission for the Mitchel Troy ward. Whilst the Council would prefer to see whole communities contained within a County ward, it notes the example in Devauden and Llangybi where there is also a cross over between county and community boundaries. Additionally, the Council consider this option preferable to creating a large rural multimember ward in combining the Mitchel Troy and Trellech United county wards.