

**Public**

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Electoral Boundary Review of Huntingdonshire

**Meeting/Date:** Council – 27th July 2016

**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Member for Planning Policy, Housing and Infrastructure

**Report by:** Managing Director

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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**Executive Summary:**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has commenced Stage two of its review of Huntingdonshire District Council's electoral arrangements. Following the Council's submission of proposed Wards, the LGBCE has published its recommendations for new Warding arrangements and these are now subject to public consultation.

The Electoral Boundary Review Working Group, which was appointed by the Council, has examined the draft proposals. There are some minor variations to the scheme submitted by the Council but the Working Group has concluded that they should be accepted. There is one more significant difference between the Council scheme and the LGBCE's recommendations. The latter sees Godmanchester and Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy combined in a Ward with Hemingford Abbots. Having considered the alternatives, Members have concluded that the recommendations should be accepted.

**Recommendation:**

**To endorse the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations for Huntingdonshire District Council.**

## **1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an opportunity to consider the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) draft recommendations for Warding arrangements for Huntingdonshire District Council. It also contains information on the process and timescale leading to completion of the review.

## **2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The LGBCE has recently published its draft recommendations for Warding arrangements for Huntingdonshire District Council. The draft recommendations are subject to public consultation and the Council can make representations if it wishes.
- 2.4 As the full Council established and appointed to the Electoral Boundary Review Working Group, its conclusions are submitted to this meeting for endorsement.

## **3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 At the meeting of the Council on 23rd March 2016, Members approved the Council's proposals for new Warding arrangements for submission to the LGBCE as part of the Stage One consultation. The LGBCE received comments from other groups and individuals and also undertook a tour of the District. These have been taken into account in producing the recommendations on which the present consultation is being conducted. A summary of the draft recommendations is attached at Appendix A and a map appears at Appendix B.

- 3.2 The majority of the LGBCE's draft recommendations match those put forward by the Council. It is therefore, suggested that in its response, the Council should endorse these recommendations. There are some minor variations to the scheme submitted by the Council relating to the following Wards:

- Stilton Folksworth and Washingly;
- Godmanchester and Hemingford Abbots;
- Huntingdon North;
- The Stukeleys;
- Fenstanton;
- Hemingford Grey and Houghton;
- St Ives South;
- St Neots Eynesbury, and
- St Neots Priory Park.

Each of these are now discussed in more detail.

### *Fenstanton and St Ives South*

- 3.3 There is no difference in the proposals for Fenstanton. There was an error on the map submitted to the LGBCE and the LGBCE, in fact, came to the same view on Fenstanton, and the proposal is identical. This also means the variation to St Ives South is removed. In the Council's submission, however, a very small area also was transferred from Hemingford Grey to St Ives South. This is no longer necessary so there is no change in this respect from the existing Ward boundaries.

#### *Stilton, Folksworth and Washingly*

- 3.4 Turning to the rest of the Wards where there are differences, Stilton, Folksworth and Washingly Ward incorporates two areas that the Council submission treated as two separate Wards. While the Council's approach achieved the goal of creating single Member Wards, it is recognised that the Ward comprising Stilton, Holme and Conington had an awkward shape and that the alternative is an improvement geographically even if it means there is a two-Member Ward. The Working Group, therefore, does not object to this proposal.

#### *St Neots Eynesbury and St Neots Priory Park*

- 3.5 The Council proposal moved a small area of St Neots between two existing Wards so as to minimise the change in boundaries. The LGBCE proposal moves a larger area and the result is that the Town centre area is brought back together within a single Ward so, again, the Working Group does not object to this proposal.

#### *Huntingdon North and The Stukeleys*

- 3.6 The LGBCE have proposed two changes to the Council submission on Huntingdon North Ward. The first is to return the small area adjacent to the Town Centre to Huntingdon. This was put forward by the Council to achieve the greater benefit of not needing to combine Godmanchester with Hemingford Abbots. This is something Members previously spent a considerable amount of time deliberating on. In terms of the effect on Huntingdon, this proposal is satisfactory, but this will be returned to in the next section on Godmanchester, Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy and Hemingford Abbots.
- 3.7 The second change to the Huntingdon North Ward involves transferring some properties to the Ward from The Stukeleys Ward. This was made possible by the change referred to in paragraph 3.6. The justification for this change is given by the LGBCE and is acceptable to the Working Group.
- 3.8 During its deliberations, the Working Group decided to look at options for splitting the proposed Huntingdon North Ward with a view to achieving a single member Ward and a two Member Ward, instead of the proposed three Member Ward. A potential solution was identified by combining two existing polling districts to produce a two Member Ward with the remainder forming a single Member Ward. This arrangement had the strength that it retained existing boundaries, which is something favoured by the Boundary Commission. It also meant there would be one fewer three Member Ward. However, despite further consultation with relevant Huntingdon Members, no support for this suggestion was forthcoming. Therefore, on the grounds that the Council's original submission recommended a three Member Ward for Huntingdon North and, with some minor changes to the external boundaries, this has been accepted by the Commission, the LGBCE proposal for Huntingdon North has been supported.

#### *Godmanchester and Hemingford Abbots*

- 3.9 As referred to previously, combining Godmanchester and Hemingford Abbots is something that was deliberated on at great length. It was recognised that the A14 created issues when the two were part of a Ward. However, to meet the statutory criteria relating to the Councillor:Electors ratio, under the Council

submission, it would have been necessary to combine part of Huntingdon with Godmanchester. The LGBCE concluded that this was not satisfactory in terms of community identity. Weighing up the two options and given that it will mean the town of Huntingdon is not split, the Working Group has decided not to oppose the LGBCE's proposal.

#### **4. KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 4.1 The risks are that equality of representation will not exist, that Members will not reflect the identities and interests of local communities and that the Council will not operate effectively. The purpose of the review is to reduce the likelihood of these risks occurring. To ensure the review is effective, it is carried out in accordance with prescribed procedures with an emphasis on consultation, reliance on evidence, openness, transparency and proportionality.

#### **5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 The Council's response to the draft recommendations has to be received by the LGBCE by 22nd August 2016. Once the consultation period closes, the LGBCE will consider all the comments it has received and produce its final recommendations. The LGBCE intends to do this by 8th November 2016. Once the recommendations have been finalised, a draft Order will be laid in Parliament for a period of 40 sitting days. Parliament can either accept or reject the recommendations. If accepted, the new electoral arrangements will be implemented at the next scheduled elections in 2018.
- 5.2 Any decision will not preclude Members from making their own representations directly to the LGBCE.

#### **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN**

- 6.1 Working with our communities - we want our communities to get involved with local decision making. In particular the objectives to:
- create stronger and more resilient communities, and
  - empower local communities.

#### **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Consultation on electoral reviews is prescribed in legislation. In the case of Huntingdonshire, the public consultation will take place on the draft recommendations between 28th June 2016 and 22nd August 2016.

#### **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The primary legislation in this area is the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which consolidates and amends legislation previously contained in the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This legislation specifies the requirement to undertake electoral reviews and prescribes their procedures and parameters.

#### **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

9. 1 The cost of the review will be met from existing resources.

## **10. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The review is required to have regard to:

- the need to secure equality of representation;
- the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- the need to secure effective and convenient local government.

## **11 RECOMMENDATION**

**It is RECOMMENDED**

**that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations for Huntingdonshire District Council be endorsed and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on Council be informed accordingly.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – [Technical Guidance](#)

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – [Taking part in the Electoral review of Huntingdonshire District Council – A guide for councillors](#)

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – [Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Huntingdonshire District Council](#)

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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## North Huntingdonshire

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
<b>Alconbury</b>	1	0%	This ward comprises the parishes of Alconbury, Alconbury Weston, Barham & Woolley, Buckworth, Easton, Hamerton, Spaldwick, Upton & Coppingford and Winwick.	Apart from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any other submissions regarding these proposed wards. We are adopting the wards proposed in the district-wide scheme as part of our draft recommendations. We are content that our draft recommendations for this area will ensure reasonable electoral equality while reflecting local community identities.
<b>Kimbolton</b>	1	-8%	This ward comprises the parishes of Brington & Molesworth, Bythorn & Keyston, Catworth, Covington, Kimbolton, Leighton, Old Weston, Stow Longa and Tilbrook.	
<b>Ramsey</b>	3	1%	This ward includes Ramsey, and the parish of Bury.	
<b>Sawtry</b>	2	-7%	This ward comprises the parishes of Abbots Ripton, Kings Ripton, Sawtry and Wood Walton.	In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received one submission specifically relating to this ward. A local resident argued that Kings Ripton and Abbots Ripton should be in the same ward because they have close community ties. We have decided to include these two communities in the same ward as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Stilton, Folksworth &amp; Washingley</b>	2	-7%	This ward comprises the parishes of Alwalton, Chesterton, Conington,	We did not receive any submissions regarding this area, apart from the district-wide scheme. We noted that the proposed Stilton ward did not have road access between

			Denton & Caldecote, Elton, Folksworth & Washingley, Glatton, Great Gidding, Haddon, Holme, Little Gidding, Morborne, Sibson-cum-Stibbington, Stilton and Water Newton.	Stilton parish and the other two parishes in the ward. We have combined two of the single-member wards proposed in the district-wide scheme – Folksworth & Washingley and Stilton – into a two-member ward. We consider that this ward will provide for effective and convenient local government, ensuring that clearly identifiable ward boundaries are used.
<b>Warboys</b>	2	3%	This ward comprises the parishes of Broughton, Old Hurst, Pidley cum Fenton, Upwood & The Raveleys, Warboys, Wistow and Woodhurst.	Apart from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any other submissions regarding these proposed wards. We are adopting the wards proposed in the district-wide scheme as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>Yaxley</b>	3	2%	This ward comprises the parishes of Farcet and Yaxley.	

### Huntingdon and Central Huntingdonshire

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of Cllrs</b>	<b>Variance 2021</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Detail</b>
<b>Brampton</b>	2	3%	This ward comprises the parish of Brampton and the Hinchingsbrooke Park area.	In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received two submissions specifically relating to this ward.  One submission came from Buckden Parish Council, which stated that it would prefer not to be in a ward with Brampton parish. Another submission, from a local resident, suggested that the A14 be used as a ward boundary in this area.

				We have adopted the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that the A14 provides a strong boundary for this ward.
<b>Buckden</b>	1	-7%	This ward comprises the parishes of Buckden, Diddington and Southoe & Midloe.	<p>In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received two submissions specifically relating to this ward.</p> <p>Buckden Parish Council argued in favour of being in a ward with Diddington and Southoe &amp; Midloe parishes, as it is now. We also received a submission from Councillor Hayward who favoured retaining the existing Buckden ward, given the community links between the parishes in the ward.</p> <p>We have adopted the Buckden ward proposed in the district-wide scheme, which is identical to the existing ward here. We are content that the proposed ward continues to reflect community identities and ties in this area.</p>
<b>Godmanchester &amp; Hemingford Abbots</b>	3	-6%	This ward comprises the parishes of Godmanchester, Hemingford Abbots and Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy.	<p>Aside from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any submissions relating to this ward.</p> <p>We have proposed a different ward from that put forward in the district-wide scheme. The district-wide scheme included part of Huntingdon town in its proposed Godmanchester ward. We consider that this would not reflect community identities in the area, and we are not proposing to include this proposal in our draft recommendations. However, Godmanchester ward would have 12% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2021 if no additional electors were included.</p>



				<p>We also noted that in the district-wide scheme, the electoral variance of the proposed The Hemingfords ward was greater than 10%. In order to address the electoral variances in both wards, we have included Hemingford Abbots in a ward with Godmanchester.</p> <p>We consider that our proposed ward here meets our statutory criteria, and we are including it as part of our draft recommendations.</p>
<b>Huntingdon East</b>	2	-1%	This ward comprises the eastern part of Huntingdon town.	<p>In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received one submission specifically relating to this ward. The submission came from a local resident who proposed a partial re-drawing of boundaries in the town but did not provide any evidence for why.</p> <p>Our proposed Huntingdon East ward is identical to the one put forward in the district-wide scheme. We consider that this ward has strong boundaries and has good electoral equality.</p>
<b>Huntingdon North</b>	3	-5%	This ward comprises the centre of Huntingdon and the northern part of the town.	<p>We received one other submission relating to this area in addition to the district-wide scheme.</p> <p>As mentioned above, we have departed from the district-wide scheme in this ward. We have not included any electors from Huntingdon in a ward with Godmanchester. The boundary of this ward follows the River Great Ouse.</p> <p>We have also proposed a different boundary between this ward and The Stukeleys ward from the one put forward in the district-wide scheme. We considered that the boundary in the district-wide scheme did not reflect community</p>

				identities, as some properties on St Peters Road and just off Stukeley Road were included in The Stukeleys ward. We considered that including these properties in Huntingdon North ward would better reflect community identities.
<b>The Stukeleys</b>	3	4%	This ward contains Stukeley Meadows, The Stukeleys parish and the Alconbury Weald development.	<p>We received a submission that suggested using the A14 as a ward boundary. This was the only submission we received in relation to this ward apart from the district-wide scheme.</p> <p>As mentioned above, we have proposed a different boundary between this ward and Huntingdon North ward from the one put forward in the district-wide scheme. We consider that our proposed boundary better reflects communities, and that the ward will ensure that electoral variances are kept to a minimum.</p>

### St Ives and East Huntingdonshire

Ward name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
<b>Fenstanton</b>	1	10%	This ward comprises the Hilton parish, and the majority of Fenstanton parish.	<p>Apart from the district-wide submission, we did not receive any other submissions regarding this area. Our proposed ward is different from the one in the district-wide scheme. We have included part of Fenstanton parish in St Ives South ward. This part comprises Low Road, as well as some streets off London Road – Maytrees, Elizabeth Court and Greenfields.</p> <p>This change from the district-wide scheme means that the ward will have acceptable electoral equality.</p>

<b>Hemingford Grey &amp; Houghton</b>	2	3%	This ward comprises the parishes of Hemingford Grey, Houghton & Wyton, and Wyton-on-the-Hill.	<p>We received two submissions regarding this ward, both from local residents. One suggested including Houghton &amp; Wyton in St Ives West ward, and one suggested including Wyton-on-the-Hill in St Ives West ward. In both cases, doing so would involve creating wards with high electoral inequality.</p> <p>As mentioned above, we have included Hemingford Abbots parish in our Godmanchester &amp; Hemingford Abbots ward. This is different from what was proposed in the district-wide scheme, which proposed having both Hemingford Abbots and Hemingford Grey parish in the same ward. Our proposals mean that both wards have good electoral equality.</p>
<b>Holywell-cum-Needingworth</b>	2	-2%	This ward comprises the parishes of Bluntisham, Colne, Earith and Holywell-cum-Needingworth.	<p>We received two submissions specifically relating to this ward. One came from Earith Parish Council which stated that it wanted to remain in a ward with the parishes of Colne and Bluntisham, but not in a ward with Holywell-cum-Needingworth parish. The other submission came from Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council, which stated that it wished to stay in a parish with other rural parishes which had similar interests and issues.</p> <p>We are adopting the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme, as it has good electoral equality and reflects local community links.</p>
<b>Somersham</b>	1	7%	This ward contains Somersham parish.	<p>Aside from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any submissions relating to this ward. We are adopting the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme as part of our draft recommendations.</p>

<b>St. Ives East</b>	2	-7%	This ward comprises the eastern part of St Ives town, as well as a rural area to the north of the town.	In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received one submission specifically relating to this ward. The submission, from a local resident, suggested that the boundary between this ward and St Ives West runs all the way along Ramsey Road. This, however, would result in St Ives West ward having an unacceptably high electoral imbalance.  We are adopting the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme, as it has good electoral equality and reflects local community links.
<b>St. Ives South</b>	2	5%	This ward contains the southern part of St Ives town, as well as part of Fenstanton parish.	As mentioned above, we have included part of Fenstanton parish in this ward, and we have proposed a different boundary here from that suggested in the district-wide scheme. This is in order to achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality in this ward and in Fenstanton ward.
<b>St. Ives West</b>	1	10%	This ward comprises the western part of St Ives town, as well as a rural area to the west of the town.	As mentioned above, we received one submission specifically relating to this ward; however, we are adopting the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme.

### St Neots and South Huntingdonshire

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of Cllrs</b>	<b>Variance 2021</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Detail</b>
<b>Great Paxton</b>	1	-8%	This ward comprises the parishes of Abbotsley, Great Gransden, Great Paxton, Toseland, Waresley-cum-Tetworth and Yelling.	In addition to the district-wide scheme, we received two submissions specifically relating to this ward. One came from Great Gransden Parish Council, which stated it would prefer to remain in a ward with its neighbouring parishes. The other was from Great Paxton Parish Council, which favoured retaining the existing arrangements.

				We are proposing to adopt the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme. This ward is very similar to the existing Gransden & The Offords ward. However, Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy parish is not in this ward; it is in our proposed Godmanchester & Hemingford Abbots ward.
<b>Great Staughton</b>	1	-7%	This ward comprises the parishes of Ellington, Grafham, Great Staughton, Hail Weston and Perry.	Aside from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any submissions relating to this ward. We are adopting the ward put forward in the district-wide scheme as part of our draft recommendations.
<b>St Neots East</b>	2	1%	This ward includes the eastern part of St Neots town, as well as the Love's Farm area.	Aside from the district-wide scheme, we did not receive any submissions relating to these wards. We are making one change to the boundary between the St Neots Eynesbury and St Neots Priory Park wards proposed in the district-wide scheme. This change provides for a stronger boundary and improves electoral equality.  We are adopting the St Neots East and St Neots Eatons wards as proposed in the district-wide scheme.
<b>St Neots Eatons</b>	3	2%	This ward includes the west of St Neots town, as well as Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford.	
<b>St Neots Eynesbury</b>	3	2%	This ward comprises the central and southern parts of St Neots town, and lies to the east of the River Great Ouse.	
<b>St Neots Priory Park</b>	3	8%	This ward comprises the area to the north of the town centre, and Little Paxton parish.	



# Overview of draft recommendations for Huntingdonshire District Council

## Summary of our recommendations

We have considered all of the submissions we received during the previous phase of consultation on warding arrangements.

Our draft recommendations propose that Huntingdonshire's 52 councillors should represent eight single-member wards, ten two-member wards and eight three-member wards across the district.

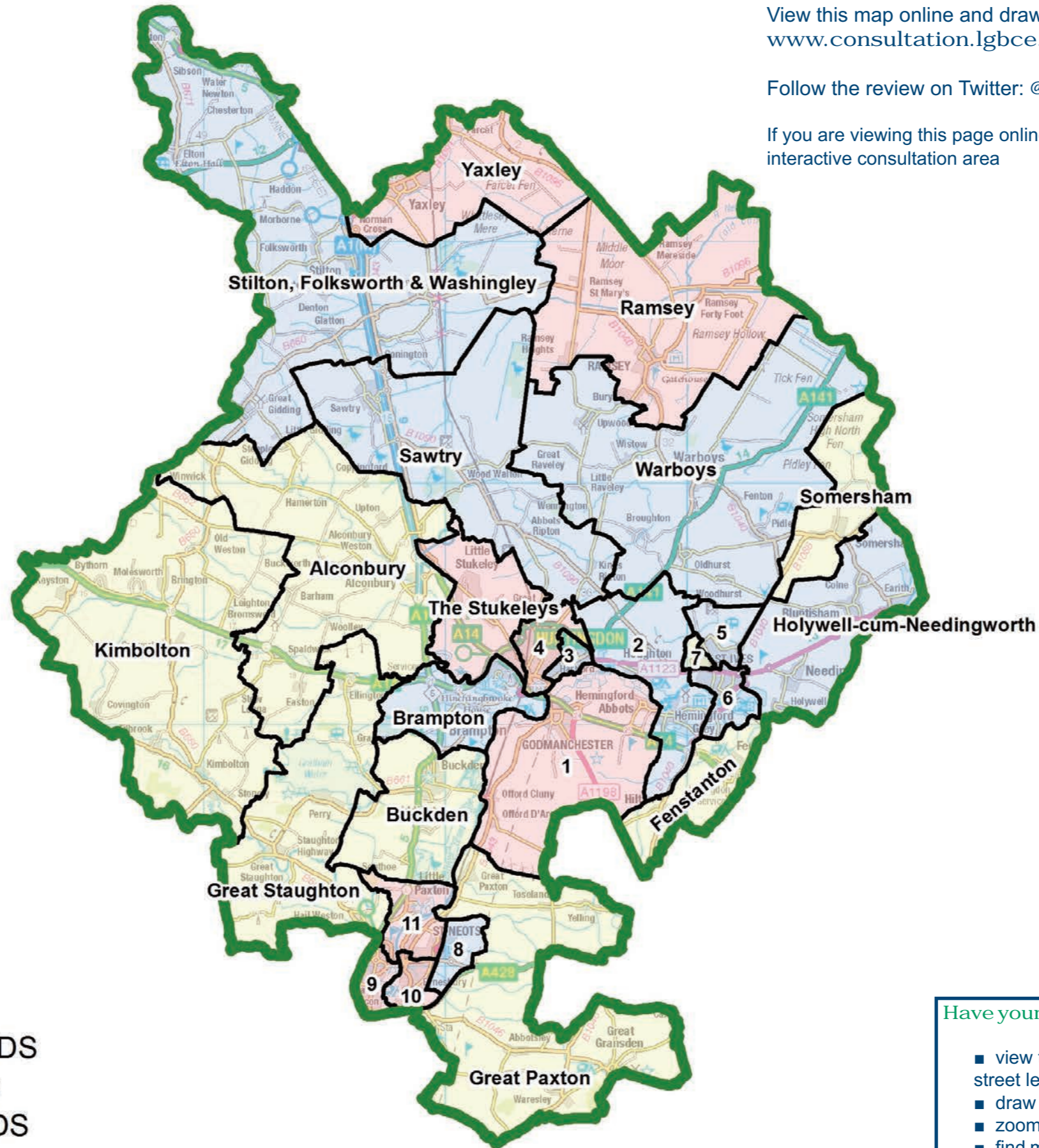
An outline of the proposals is shown in the map to the right of this box. A detailed report on the recommendations and interactive mapping is available on our website at: [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk).

The Commission welcomes comments on these draft recommendations whether you support the proposals or if wish to put forward alternative arrangements. In particular, the Commission welcomes 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.

## Map key:

- 1 – Godmanchester & Hemingford Abbots
- 2 – Hemingford Grey & Houghton
- 3 – Huntingdon East
- 4 – Huntingdon North
- 5 – St Ives East
- 6 – St Ives South
- 7 – St Ives West
- 8 – St Neots East
- 9 – St Neots Eatons
- 10 – St Neots Eynesbury
- 11 – St Neots Priory Park

- SINGLE-MEMBER WARDS
- TWO-MEMBER WARDS
- THREE-MEMBER WARDS



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

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

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