



## **Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Torbay Council – Electoral Review – Submission by Torbay Council**

### **1. Introduction**

This submission sets out a response from Torbay Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) invitation to comment on their draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Torbay Council.

The Council has already submitted initial recommendations on proposed changes to warding patterns as part of an earlier consultation process. Details of these recommendations together with other responses can be found at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/devon/torbay>

The cross party Constitution Working Party met on two occasions to consider the LGBCE's draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Torbay Council. This document sets out the recommendations from the Constitution Working Party, which were approved by the Council on 7 December 2017 (to be confirmed after the meeting).

### **2. Torbay Council Submission**

Torbay Council acknowledges that it is extremely difficult to ensure exact electoral equality across Torbay, whilst keeping communities together and recognising geographical boundaries. The Council broadly supports the proposals set out in the LGBCE's draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Torbay Council, subject to the following recommendations:

- (a) Plainmoor should remain in the St Marychurch Ward, where it currently sits, as the residents of this area interact more with the St Marychurch area than the Ellacombe area in terms of their day to day activities;
- (b) in light of the proposed boundaries for the Wellswood Ward, the current Wellswood Ward name should be retained as this name is familiar with local residents;
- (c) based on the proposed boundaries for the Torwood Ward shown in the consultation proposals, the Tormohun Ward name should be retained as this is a historical name that has been used for this area for a long time and the community relate to this name;

- (d) the proposed new Collaton St Mary Ward should be combined with the Kings Ash Ward to make a three member Ward and the Ward should be named 'Kings Ash with Collaton', this fits with the current Blatchcombe Ward area. There is no direct community link between this area and Goodrington, whereas there is some link to residents in the southern part of the Kings Ash Ward and therefore it would sit better within this Ward.

Members feel that having a three member Ward will provide more flexibility for the Ward Councillors to be able to support their residents and enable them to work together on Ward issues. Residents in the area are likely to feel that they are being treated differently to people living in other wards in Torbay if they were to have only one member to represent them on the Council, when all other residents in Torbay have either two or three members. This would therefore not demonstrate electoral equality in terms of number of members available to represent residents.

The 21 properties, 31 electors on the Brixham Road at Tweenaway should be moved from the Collaton St Mary Ward to the Goodrington with Roselands Ward as they are the only properties on that side of the road that are in the proposed Collaton St Mary Ward;

- (e) no changes should be made to the current Tor Bay area which currently sits within the Wellswood Ward (comprising the coastline and sea area of Torbay) this is because there are no electors affected by the proposal and therefore keeping the boundaries the same will have no impact on electoral equality. This area is managed by the Council's Harbour Committee and it could cause confusion if it were split between the different Wards;
- (f) the Maidencombe area formerly known as Polling District HA up to and including Easterfield Lane should be moved from the new Barton with Watcombe Ward to the St Marychurch Ward as the Maidencombe residents feel they belong to the community within the St Marychurch area and carry out more of their day to day activities in this area. This equates to 625 electors (based on 2023 predictions). This would take the Barton with Watcombe to 8,242 electors with a variance of -4% and the St Marychurch Ward to 9,047 electors with a variance of 5% in 2023; and
- (g) the Churston with Galmpton Ward should be renamed 'Churston and Galmpton with Hookhills' as highest number of residents live within Galmpton and Hookhills and the people of Hookhills in Paignton feel no association with Churston and Galmpton which is in Brixham. Members feel that the name of the Ward should reflect that the area covers both Paignton and Brixham and Churston and Galmpton should remain in the name of the Ward as these two areas are familiar with local residents and this is reflected in the suggested Ward name.