

For the attention of Ilminster Town Council Parish

22 August 2017

Dear Mrs Joy Norris,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SOUTH SOMERSET: WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has formally commenced an electoral review of South Somerset. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the review and seek your views on future ward boundaries for the council.

The Commission is carrying out a review to deliver electoral equality for voters across the district. At present, some district councillors represent many more, or many fewer, electors than their colleagues elsewhere in the district. The review aims to correct those imbalances.

What is an electoral review?

The electoral review will recommend new electoral arrangements for South Somerset District Council. It will propose:

- The total number of councillors elected to the council in the future
- The number of wards
- The number of councillors representing each ward
- Ward boundaries
- Names of wards

For parishes, the review can recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish wards and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward. However, this is only in circumstances where the parished area is to be divided between wards. Even in these circumstances, the Commission will not normally recommend any change to the number of councillors to be elected to a parish or town council. The Commission has no power to consider changes to the external boundaries of a parish or the creation of new parishes.

When?

22 August 2017 is the start of a ten-week public consultation during which the Commission is inviting proposals for new warding arrangements. The consultation will close on 30 October 2017. After considering all representations made during this consultation, the Commission intends to publish draft recommendations in January 2018. There will then be a further period of consultation on the draft recommendations. Final recommendations are expected to be published in May 2018. The new electoral arrangements will come into effect at the local elections in 2019.

How to get involved?

This is a public consultation and we welcome views from individuals and organisations across the district on where they think new ward patterns should be drawn.

The Commission is minded to recommend that 60 councillors should be elected to South Somerset District Council in the future. It is now inviting proposals to help it draw up a pattern of wards to accommodate 60 district councillors.

In drawing up a pattern of electoral wards, the Commission must balance three criteria, which are set out in law, namely:

- To deliver electoral equality where each district councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the district.
- That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

We are asking local people and organisations for their views as to the best pattern of wards for the district which meet the requirements set out above.

The Commission will treat all submissions equally and will judge each case on its merits and against the statutory criteria. If you wish to put forward a view, we would also urge you to ensure that evidence supports your submission. For example, if you wish to argue that two parishes should be included in the same electoral ward, make sure you tell the Commission why they should be together, providing evidence about community facilities, ties, organisations, and amenities, rather than simply asserting that they belong together.

There is plenty more advice on our website about how you can get involved in the consultation and put your views forward. Log on to www.lgbce.org.uk to find out more. The website includes the technical guidance that explains the process and our policies as well as guidance on how to take part in each part of the process. We have set up a page on our site which is dedicated to the review of South Somerset where you can find all the relevant information.

You can also access interactive maps of the current ward boundaries across the district on our specialist consultation portal. The portal also allows you to draw your own boundaries, mark areas of interest on the map and upload documents directly to the site. Log on to <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk> to access the portal or find it via our main website.

Get in touch

We encourage as many people and organisations as possible to get involved with the consultation and we encourage local organisations and parish councils to engage their local networks and communities in the review.

View interactive maps of the district, draw your own boundaries, and have your say at our specialist consultation portal at: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>.

Find out more about the review at: www.lgbce.org.uk.

Email your views to: reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

Follow us on Twitter at: [@lgbce](https://twitter.com/lgbce).

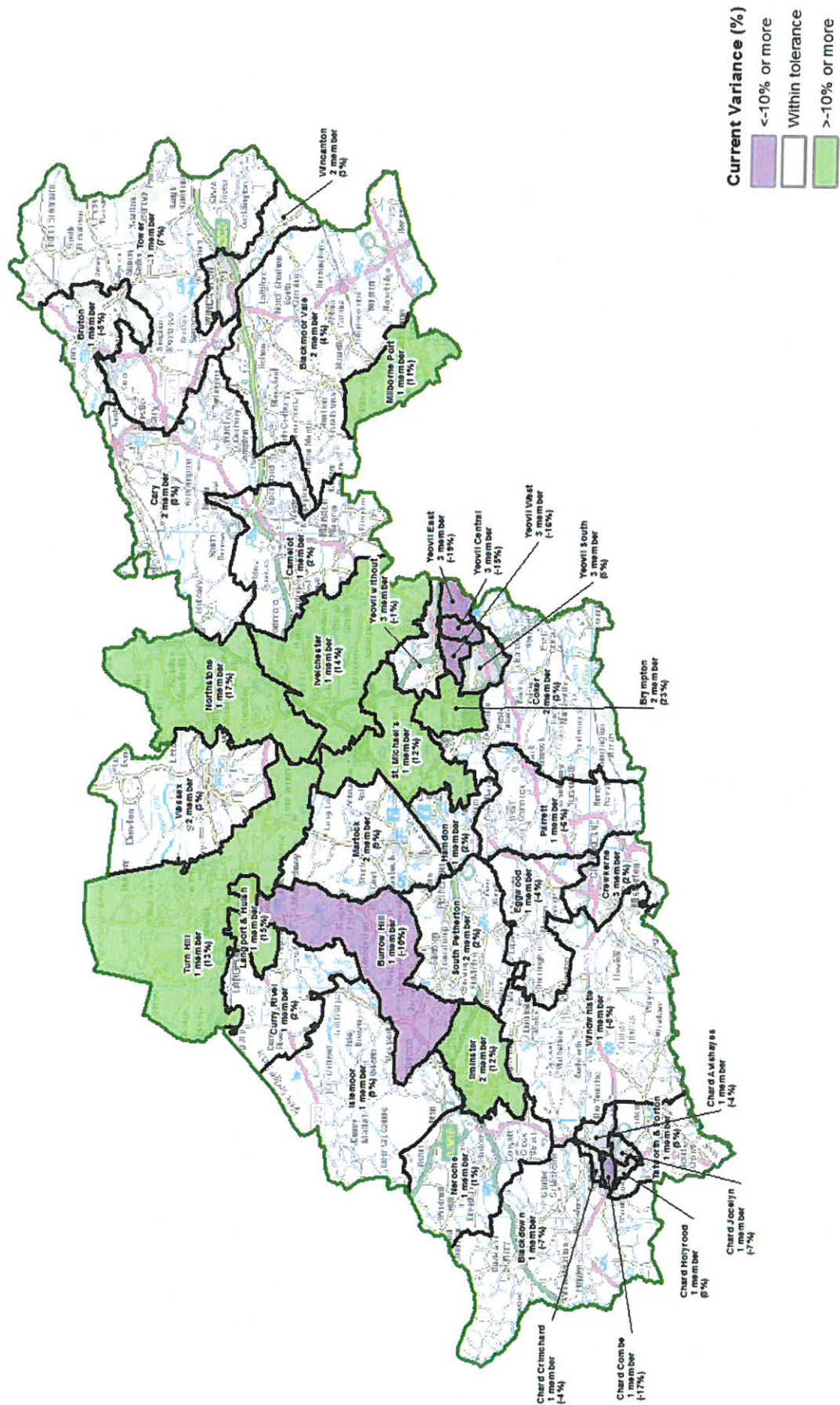
Write to: Review Officer (South Somerset)
 Local Government Boundary Commission for England
 14th Floor Millbank Tower
 Millbank
 London
 SW1P 4QP

This phase of consultation closes on 30 October 2017. We will write to you again when we open our consultation on draft recommendations.

Please note that the interests of transparency, copies of the all representations we receive during this review will be placed on our website. We remove any personal identifying information such as signatures and private residential addresses prior to placing any submissions in the public domain.

Yours sincerely

Laura Taylor
Review Officer
Reviews@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1525



Electoral Review of South Somerset

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England is carrying out an electoral review of South Somerset District Council.

The review will draw new council ward boundaries across South Somerset.

The Commission has also announced that the council should have 60 councillors in future: the same as the current arrangements.

Now we are asking for evidence about your local area to help us decide a new pattern of wards for South Somerset.

Your views will make a difference

Local people know their area best. That's why we are asking you for evidence on a range of issues:

- Do you have suggestions about where your ward boundaries should be?
- Which areas do you identify as your local community?
- Where do people in your area go to access local facilities such as shops and leisure activities?

For more details and interactive maps, visit:

consultation.lgbce.org.uk or **www.lgbce.org.uk**

Have your say

Send your views to:

The Review Officer (South Somerset)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th floor, Millbank Tower
Millbank
London SW1P 4QP

Email: **reviews@lgbce.org.uk**

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The consultation closes on **30 October 2017**

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

