

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

Mrs Sarah Taylor
Lancaster City Council
Head of Governance
Town Hall
Dalton Square
Lancaster LA1 1PF

6 June 2011

Dear Mrs Taylor

Electoral Review and Principal Area Boundary Reviews affecting Lancaster

Thank you for your letter of 17 March and email of 3 June regarding potential reviews of Lancaster.

Electoral Review

I note that your Council requests an electoral review to address the electoral imbalance in Ellel ward in time for elections in 2015.

The Commission has been developing its work programme for the next two years and has received quite a number of requests from local authorities seeking an electoral review, to the extent that in formulating the programme, it has had to prioritise them.

In developing its review programme, the Commission has had regard for the need to ensure that its programme delivers electoral equality for voters in local authority elections across England. In order to meet that objective, the Commission has looked to first address those requests from local authorities in which the electoral variances are the most extreme. While I note the information you have provided concerning Ellel ward, given the above, we have been unable to include Lancaster in the Commission's two-year programme.

However, given that there is an electoral imbalance in Ellel ward and your council's desire for a review to be undertaken in time for elections in 2015, the Commission will take into account your request when deciding which reviews to undertake following the completion of its two year programme.

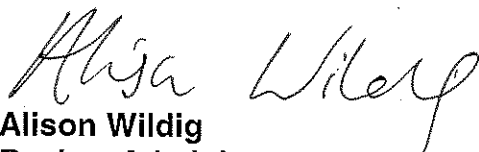
I note that it is your council's desire for the review to consider Ellel ward only. The LGBCE cannot commit to looking at only one or two specific wards when it conducts an electoral review. However, the LGBCE has outlined in its guidance (published May 2011) three 'types' of electoral review, to reflect that there are different scales of change required. If an electoral review of Lancaster is undertaken, it may be appropriate that it is categorised as a 'type A' review, where no change in council size is necessary. This will of course be a matter to be considered when any review is undertaken. For your information, more details about the 'types' of review can be found in our 'electoral reviews: technical guidance', available on our website.

Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR)

As I said in my previous letter, the LGBCE would only conduct a PABR if both Lancaster and Wyre councils supported such a review. If there was authority support and the LGBCE decided to conduct a review, it would be our intention to conduct it in advance of any electoral review being carried out so that the new external boundaries could be used when determining warding patterns as part of the electoral review.

The LGBCE has not agreed its programme of PABRs but will do so taking into account all relevant factors, including whether an electoral review is scheduled to be conducted in any affected area. Accordingly, your council may wish to consider the desirability of a PABR being undertaken on its boundary with Wyre, in principle. If, on the basis that the LGBCE conducts a review, it will be our priority to complete it in advance of any electoral review.

I hope that this letter is helpful, I would be happy to discuss the issues I have raised if that would be useful.



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