

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING:	COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE:	18 June 2013
TITLE OF REPORT:	Electoral Reviews: Council Size Policy
REPORT BY:	Chief Executive
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To report on Boundary Commission proposals to undertake an electoral review of council size of principal areas in Wales

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW) is required to carry out periodic reviews of the electoral arrangements of principal areas in Wales.

1.2 In May 2012, the LGBCW published a consultation paper setting out a preliminary views of how Council size may be determined as a precursor to an elected review. As a result of representation received on the methodologies to be used, for determining Council size, a further consultation paper has been produced setting out the Commissions views and approach based on the method currently in place in Scotland with variations of geography, topography and population density. A copy of the consultation paper is enclosed.

Proposed Methodology

1.3 A number of factors are proposed for consideration including population density and the dispersal of population with a local authority area.

1.4 The consultation paper proposes that authorities be placed in 4 categories based on urbanisation and population density. As far as Ynys Môn is concerned, the Council would be placed in category 4 (more than 50% of population living outside towns with more than 10,000 population and less than 2 persons per hectare in relation to population density).

1.5 This would give a Councillor to population ratio of 2,000 and, applying this methodology, the Councillor to population ratio would give a total of 35 Councillors for Ynys Môn.

Constraints

1.6 However, the consultation paper notes that any method for determining Council size may be constrained by legislation and Ministerial Direction and an awareness of the impact of any proposed change to the existing size of Councils.

1.7 Ministerial Directions have previously stated:

- a) *It is considered that a minimum number of 30 councillors is required for the proper management of the affairs of a county or a county borough council;*
- b) *It is considered that, in order to minimize the risk of a county council or a county borough council becoming unwieldy and difficult to manage, a maximum number of 75 councillors is ordinarily required to the proper management of the affairs of a county or a county borough council.*

1.8 From the earlier consultation there appears to be a general acceptance of these matters.

1.9 The impact that a significant change may have on the running of a council if it applied as a result of a single electoral review has also been considered by the Commission. A constraint has therefore been applied so that, for each review, the number of councillors will not vary by more than 10% of current councillor numbers. However, at the request of the principal council concerned the Commission will consider exceeding its 10% variance limit in moving towards the size of council determined by the model.

2.0 Overall as far as Ynys Môn is concerned and taking into account these constraints, the number of councillors proposed would increase to 33.

The consultation paper seeks views on:-

- Categorization parameters (ensuring that only significant changes in population density and urbanization would change a local authority's category) [section 2 of the consultation paper];
- Councillor to population ratio (whether the councillor to population ratios are appropriate for each category) [section 2 of the consultation paper];
- Maximum and minimum Council size – views on Ministerial Directions [section 3 of the consultation report];
- Review cap – limitations on the amount of change of councillor numbers [section 3 of the report].

2.1 Views on these proposals are requested by 19th June 2013.

Recommendation

The Council is requested to formulate its response to the issues raised in the consultation paper and authorise the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to respond accordingly.