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Isle of Wight Council Boundary Review 2018

Submission to the Local
Government Boundary
Commission for England

Part Two – Division Arrangements

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1. Background

- 1.1. On 15th September 2017 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (hereafter referred to as “LGBCE”) notified the Chief Executive of the Isle of Wight Council that the authority would be included in the Commission’s programme of reviews for 2018 / 2019. The review commenced in December 2017, and on 24th April 2018 following conclusion of Part One of the review, the LGBCE determined that the authority should continue to consist of 40 elected members, which is unchanged since the previous review took effect in 2009.
- 1.2. Using known planning applications and forecasts of phased developments, electorates for each polling district were projected through to 2024 and submitted to the LGBCE. Our forecast methodology was considered robust, and the forecast total electorate for 2024 of 115,133 was accepted. This will give an average electorate per elected member in 2024 of 2878, and increase of 89 or 3.19% over the March 2018 average.
- 1.3. The period of consultation on warding patterns will close on 9th July 2018, and the LGBCE will publish their draft recommendations on 4th September 2018. A further period of consultation on the warding patterns will follow, and this will close on 12th November 2018. The LGBCE will consider their final recommendations on 18th December 2018, although these may not be published until the New Year of 2019. Any changes to warding patterns will take effect for the 2021 local elections, and may include consequential amendments to the warding arrangements of Parish and Town Councils.

2. Constraints

- 2.1. The review has been triggered by an electoral imbalance between the current Electoral Divisions of the Isle of Wight Council. The LGBCE will review an authority when one of the following triggers is met, *and* where the imbalance is unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate:
 - More than 30% of Divisions having an electoral imbalance of greater than +/- 10% from the authority average *and / or*
 - One or more Division having an imbalance of more than 30%
- 2.2. The authority currently meets the Commission’s criteria for electoral inequality with 36% of wards having a variance of greater than +/-10%, and one ward, (Whippingham and Osbourne) having a variance of greater than +20%”
- 2.3. Any submission made to the LGBCE should seek to remove or to reduce the electoral imbalance, and should, ideally, work towards all electoral divisions being within a variance of +/- 10% from the average. However, the Commission will accept submissions that do not meet these criteria where evidence can be submitted to justify a larger variation.
- 2.4. The LGBCE has to consider three criteria when determining proposals for electoral division boundaries. These are:

- Delivering electoral equality for local voters – ensuring that each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors.
- Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities – establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties with easily identifiable boundaries.
- Promoting effective and convenient local government – ensuring that Divisions can be represented effectively by their elected members and that the authority as a whole can also conduct its business effectively.

2.5. The LGBCE recognises that it is not always possible for a boundary proposal to meet all three of these criteria, and in some cases the criteria can contradict each other; for example where a proposed division may represent the shape and identity of a local community, but which contributes to a poor level of electoral equality. In these cases the Commission can use discretion, subject to the quality of evidence presented, to come to a conclusion which may override one or more of the criteria.

3. Proposal Overview

3.1. This proposal puts forward a scheme of electoral divisions which produces the following outcomes:

- The scheme produces 40 single-member electoral divisions
- The scheme improves electoral equality between electoral divisions
- The scheme respects Parish and Town Council boundaries
- The scheme respects local community identities

3.2. Whilst the scheme does not ensure that all electoral divisions are within the +/- 10% variance which the LGBCE desires, the scheme does reduce the number of divisions which are outside that range to eight, which is 20.00% of the 40 divisions, and which, on its own, is not high enough to trigger a further electoral review until after 2024.

3.3. The proposal is submitted by way of maps, showing various areas of the Isle of Wight, and by written description including justification. Each geographical area description is followed by a table, which shows the current electorate, along with the forecast electorate for 2024 both before and after changes to boundaries are made. Divisions with a variance of more than 10% are highlighted in yellow, and those with a variance of more than 20% are highlighted in red.

3.4. In its final proposals in 2008, as part of the last boundary review of the Island, the LGBCE attached particular importance to maintaining community identity in the Freshwater and Totland area and in the Chale, Niton and Whitwell Division. We have sought to reflect and respect that earlier decision in the proposals we have brought forward for those areas.

3.5. The Isle of Wight Council understands that the LGBCE has no particular view on the merits or otherwise of single member or multi-member Divisions. However, that the Island has only one multi-member Division and 38 single-member

Divisions is an anomaly which causes confusion and dissatisfaction for the elected members of that Division, for residents of the Division and its parish councils. More widely, it creates a perception that residents of that Division are over-represented on the council. In short, it is perceived to undermine the principle of democratic equality.

- 3.6. As an Island, many of the Division boundaries are defined by the geography of the coast and are immovable. Despite this, we have prepared a submission that substantially meets the LGBCE's principles and brings the variance in electoral numbers within the range that would avoid another review until at least 2024, and which strongly reflects community identity and promotes the efficient delivery of local government.

4. Proposal Detail – Western Wight

- 4.1. This area consists of the largely rural part of the Island to the west of Newport, and includes the towns of Freshwater and Yarmouth. There are five electoral divisions in this geographical area, and, without modifications to boundaries, there are predicted to be variations outside of the +/-10% range in two Divisions, Freshwater North and Totland.
- 4.2. The Divisions in this geographical area are entirely aligned with parish council boundaries; Freshwater North and South make up the parish of Freshwater; Totland is wholly coterminous with the parish of Totland, Central Wight is composed of the four rural parishes of Brighstone, Chillerton & Gatcombe, Rookley and Shorwell, whilst West Wight is composed of the three parishes of Calbourne, Shalfleet and Yarmouth.
- 4.3. It is the opinion of the Isle of Wight Council that maintaining the links between elected members of the principal authority and local Parish and Town councils is important, as it allows elected members to interact effectively with residents. Given that the three divisions to the extreme west of this area (Freshwater North, Freshwater South and Totland) are all projected to be under the average electorate for the Isle of Wight in 2024 there is little merit in adjusting boundaries, and our proposal is to make no adjustments to Totland (nor to Central Wight or West Wight, both of which are projected to be well within the +/- 10% variance).
- 4.4. The Isle of Wight Council do propose that the boundary between Freshwater North and Freshwater South is adjusted in the area to the north-west of Freshwater South, and this will have the effect of evening-out the electoral imbalance to give both areas an imbalance of -15%. This is a minor change to the boundary, and will not affect the interests or identity of the local community, nor will it adversely affect the delivery of effective and convenient local government, which already exists in this area.
- 4.5. The effect of this adjustment will mean that both Freshwater Divisions are under the expected average by 15%, whilst Totland will be under the average by 11%. Whilst these deviations from the average are higher than that desired by the LGBCE, the authority considers that maintaining coterminosity between Parish and Town Council boundaries and their respective electoral divisions is

important, as this fosters a good working relationship between members of the Isle of Wight Council and their local councils.

- 4.6. The LGBCE itself recognises this importance. In June 2008 the LGBCE published their final recommendations for the review that had recently been carried out for the Isle of Wight, and decided to dismiss a proposal from the Isle of Wight Council which met the +/-10% target, but which relied on purely arbitrary boundaries in order to achieve this. The LGBCE concluded that *“This would result in a Freshwater North electoral division with 14% fewer electors than the county average by 2011, an imbalance we acknowledged to be poor. However, we considered uniting Totland parish in one electoral division would provide a better reflection of community identity.”* (LGBCE, 2008, para 97)
- 4.7. The Isle of Wight Council considers that a similar rationale should be applied to the two Freshwater divisions. Having established that the boundary between Totland and Freshwater should remain unchanged, we would argue that the same can be said for the boundaries between the two Freshwater divisions and those of West Wight and Central Wight. The boundaries here are either in very rural areas or defined by the centre of the Western Yar, and as these are also Parish / Town Council boundaries the same argument pertaining to the Totland boundary can also be applied here, and any attempt to draw arbitrary boundaries purely to satisfy electoral equality could dilute effective local representation, and prove confusing for electors who may find themselves in one Parish / Town Council area, but also in an electoral division which does not represent the majority of that Parish / Town Council area, or in one which does not share a local geographical name

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Central Wight | 1 | 2,903 | 4% | 3,037 | 6% | 3,037 | 6% |
| Freshwater North | 1 | 2,234 | -20% | 2,278 | -21% | 2,446 | -15% |
| Freshwater South | 1 | 2,590 | -7% | 2,617 | -9% | 2,449 | -15% |
| Totland | 1 | 2,546 | -9% | 2,573 | -11% | 2,573 | -11% |
| West Wight | 1 | 2,800 | 0% | 2,838 | -1% | 2,838 | -1% |

5. Proposal Detail – Cowes Area

- 5.1. The Cowes area comprises of four electoral divisions to the north of the Island, and to the west of the River Medina. The forecast electorates, without modification, shows two divisions outside of the +/-10% range, Cowes North and Cowes West & Gurnard.
- 5.2. Cowes Medina and Cowes South & Northwood are predicted to have good levels of electoral equality in 2024, however Cowes North will be at -12%, whilst Cowes West & Gurnard will be at +17%. The proposal is to adjust the boundary between

these two divisions to achieve a higher degree of electoral equality, whilst preserving local community identity.

- 5.3. The revised boundary, shown on the attached map, was proposed by the two elected members for the Divisions in question, and has been based upon comprehensive local knowledge of the area and a desire not to split local communities. The arguments and reasoning presented by those members is entirely sound, and the proposed boundary has been drawn from their proposals without alteration. The original submission from these members will be submitted to the LGBCE along with this report and associated maps.
- 5.4. Given the depth and breadth of the arguments presented by the local members, there is little further that can be added to the submission for the Cowes area, and no proposals were forthcoming for the other two divisions which serve their local areas efficiently already.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cowes Medina | 1 | 3,039 | 9% | 3,045 | 6% | 3,045 | 6% |
| Cowes North | 1 | 2,511 | -10% | 2,522 | -12% | 2,865 | 0% |
| Cowes South and Northwood | 1 | 2,901 | 4% | 2,904 | 1% | 2,904 | 1% |
| Cowes West and Gurnard | 1 | 3,227 | 16% | 3,374 | 17% | 3,031 | 5% |

6. Proposal Detail – Newport

- 6.1. Newport is located at the tidal limit of the River Medina in the centre of the Island, and comprises seven electoral divisions. The current electorates, without modification, for 2024 shows that four of these divisions would be outside of the +/-10% threshold.
- 6.2. Newport East contains a large area of residential development which is still in the process of being built, with completion anticipated by 2024. This development accounts for the majority of new properties in the Newport area, and if left uncorrected will have a deviation from the average electoral division of +23%. Three other divisions will also deviate from the average by more 10%.
- 6.3. In order to correct the imbalance in the Newport East division, it is proposed to move the western boundary eastward so that it aligns with the main road (St Georges Way) and the River Medina. This is similar to the boundary line used prior to the 2008 review, and at that time the boundary was expanded westwards by as small a margin as possible in order to accommodate for anticipated residential building in the division, the building of which continues to progress.
- 6.4. Newport East is a cohesive area, defined by its history, and comprises a small core of Victorian terraces near the River Medina, with successive waves of residential development moving further away from the core of the town.

Residents can easily identify with the area, and a number of services exist to support residents in the area, which has expanded over the years to include newer developments.

- 6.5. Initially consideration was given to removing the area around Buckbury Lane from Newport East, as it is recognised that the division is just over the +/-10% threshold. However, well-argued representations from the local member persuaded us that despite the geographic separation that appears to exist on the ground there is, in fact, a community link between the two areas, and that a number of residents of Buckbury Lane are former residents of the Pan area in Newport East. We are also proposing that this division be renamed “Pan and Barton” in order to better reflect this community identity.
- 6.6. Other proposed alterations within the Newport area serve not only to adjust the electorates so that, as far as reasonably practicable, they sit within the +/-10% threshold, but also to better reflect geographical areas and communities. We are proposing a number of alterations to the boundaries of Newport Central so that the area better reflects its name, and it will indeed reflect the centre of Newport in future.
- 6.7. In order to achieve this, the current divide of the Sylvan Drive estate along what was previously the footpath known as Petticoat Lane is to be removed so that all of the residential estate is included in Newport West, and two small Victorian residential areas (a small section of Carisbrooke Road and one half of Caesars Road) is added to Newport Central. By doing this the whole of Caesars Road will be in Newport Central, which will provide better community identity for this distinctive road.
- 6.8. As part of the 2008 review, a number of boundaries were drawn arbitrarily in order to reduce the number of Divisions which exceeded the +/-10% thresholds. This included Newport North which was expanded into the town centre. This review gives us the opportunity to correct this anomaly by moving that part of Newport North which is south of the River Medina and the Medina Way dual carriageway into Newport Central.
- 6.9. Newport North is also amended by including the southern part of the “Whippingham and Osborne” Division within its boundaries. This will serve the purpose of improving electoral equality in this Division, and will also end the current bisection of Whippingham Parish Council into two, very unequal wards. This was, in itself, the consequence of a previous attempt to improve electoral equality, but which also severed Whippingham Parish Council in two. It is proposed that this division, which lies wholly along the main road from Newport to East Cowes, be renamed “Fairlee and Whippingham” in order to better reflect community identity.
- 6.10. As part of the changes to Newport East (Pan and Barton), the whole of the Shide area is to be moved back into Newport South, to restore the boundaries to a similar position to those which existed prior to 2009. Again, an arbitrary proposal in order to achieve a correct balance of numbers led to this area being divided in the previous review. An area to the west of the Jewson “saw mills” is also to be transferred from Newport South to Newport Central. We are also proposing that

this area be renamed “Mountjoy and Shide”, again in order to better reflect community identity.

- 6.11. The area of housing at the lower end of Hunnyhill is to be included in the existing Parkhurst division, with this division being renamed “Parkhurst and Hunnyhill”, which will, again, provide better geographical community identity.
- 6.12. To south of Newport, is a development of residential properties on a former NHS site (Whitecroft), which is rural in nature, and lies adjacent to the road running south from Carisbrooke towards Chale. It is proposed that this area be transferred from Newport South (Mountjoy and Shide) into Carisbrooke, which itself is to be renamed “Carisbrooke and Gunville” in order to better represent the areas which this division serves. It is considered that Whitecroft has more in common with the rural aspects of Carisbrooke (and Gunville) than with Newport South (Mounjoy and Shide), which includes more urbanised areas nearer the centre of Newport.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Carisbrooke | 1 | 2,665 | -4% | 2,773 | -4% | 2,872 | 0% |
| Newport Central | 1 | 2,923 | 5% | 2,965 | 3% | 2,734 | -5% |
| Newport East | 1 | 2,896 | 4% | 3,547 | 23% | 3,204 | 11% |
| Newport North | 1 | 2,510 | -10% | 2,519 | -12% | 2,954 | 3% |
| Newport South | 1 | 2,798 | 0% | 2,801 | -3% | 2,799 | -3% |
| Newport West | 1 | 2,570 | -8% | 2,570 | -11% | 2,905 | 1% |
| Parkhurst | 1 | 2,392 | -14% | 2,403 | -17% | 2,695 | -6% |

7. Proposal Detail - South Wight

- 7.1. This are comprises the three electoral divisions of Chale, Niton & Whitwell, Ventnor East and Ventnor West, which are located on the southern coast of the Island. All of these divisions are outside of the +/-10% threshold, and, as with other, mainly rural electoral divisions, the Isle of Wight Council are recommending that all three divisions are left unchanged, despite the obvious electoral inequality.
- 7.2. Ventnor is geographically isolated from the rest of the Island, both by topographical features, most noticeably the high downland which rings the town on the landward side, and also in terms of transportation links as there are only three main roads into the town, one from each of the east, north, and west. Ventnor has a decidedly unique feel to it, and the town has something of an independent nature (in the non-political sense), coupled with a very strong and well-engaged Town Council.

- 7.3. The divisions of Ventnor East and Ventnor East are wholly contained within the boundaries of the Town Council, and the Isle of Wight Council do not wish to blur the links between local members of the Isle of Wight Council and the Town Council area by establishing divisions which straddle boundaries and can reduce strong local links which have been established in recent years.
- 7.4. The division of Chale, Niton and Whitwell is comprised of two smaller Parish Councils, “Chale” and “Niton and Whitwell”. Once again, the Isle of Wight Council considers that the interests of electors in this very rural area are best served by maintaining those links with a single elected member of the Isle of Wight Council, and that any attempts to “even up” numbers by cutting and splicing parts of neighbouring Parish and Town Councils will produce a patchwork of divisions which do not reflect, in part or in whole, the communities of the electors whom they are elected to represent.
- 7.5. The LGBCE came to a similar conclusion in 2008 when the Final Recommendations for the Isle of Wight Council area were published. In these Recommendations the LGBCE stated that *“Our proposed Ventnor West and Ventnor East electoral divisions would be coterminous with Ventnor parish. Consequently the boundary this electoral division would share with Chale, Niton & Whitwell electoral division would not breach the shared boundary of Niton & Whitwell and Ventnor parishes. This would result in a Chale, Niton & Whitwell electoral division having 14% fewer electors per councillor than the county average by 2011. However, in addition to the evidence we received to support this, we considered that avoiding an arbitrary split of Ventnor parish would provide a better reflection of community identities. Consequently, we adopted this as part of our draft recommendations.”* (LGBCE, 2008, para 91)

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Chale, Niton and Whitwell | 1 | 2,353 | -16% | 2,359 | -18% | 2,359 | -18% |
| Ventnor East | 1 | 2,433 | -13% | 2,442 | -15% | 2,442 | -15% |
| Ventnor West | 1 | 2,404 | -14% | 2,460 | -15% | 2,460 | -15% |

8. Proposal Detail - East Cowes, Whippingham & Osborne and Wootton Bridge

- 8.1. These three electoral divisions are located in the north of the Island, to the east of the River Medina. The projected electorates for Wotton Bridge are such, that no change to the boundaries of this division, are being proposed.
- 8.2. East Cowes is just at the upper-edge of the desired +/- 10% variance range, but Whippingham and Osborne will be 28% over the average by 2024, as a major development which commenced some years ago comes to completion. The proposal is to leave the existing East Cowes division unchanged, and to reduce the size of the Whippingham and Osborne ward by removing that part of Whippingham Parish Council which forms the southern part of the division, and

joining it instead to the current “Newport North” Division, which already includes the southern part of Whippingham Parish.

- 8.3. This would have the effect of reducing the projected electorate in what remains as the proposed “Osborne” Division to +8%, and would remove the current division boundary which partially bisects the Whippingham Parish Council and which, as a result, divides the Parish Council area into two, very unequal, wards. This change is also considered in the paragraphs on the Newport area, and is consistent with the desire of the Isle of Wight Council not to divide small Parishes with electoral division boundaries unless absolutely necessary.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| East Cowes | 1 | 3,138 | 13% | 3,155 | 10% | 3,155 | 10% |
| Whippingham and Osborne | 1 | 3,544 | 27% | 3,682 | 28% | 3,097 | 8% |
| Wootton Bridge | 1 | 2,871 | 3% | 2,874 | 0% | 2,874 | 0% |

9. Proposal Detail – Ryde area

- 9.1. Ryde comprises of seven electoral divisions, and is located towards the North-East of the Island. At present, all of the divisions display good electoral equality, but by 2024 a large development, known as “Pennyfeathers” will be well under way, and figures supplied by the local planning authority predict that much of the development will have been completed. This residential development is wholly within Ryde East, and without correction will result in this division being 52% over the average target.
- 9.2. With the exception of Ryde South, all of the other divisions in Ryde are at, or below, the average for the Island, which gives scope for absorbing the predicted additional electors in Ryde East within the whole of the Ryde area.
- 9.3. Taking Ryde East as the starting point, the additional electors in the Pennyfeathers development will increase the electorate to 4362, and so to accommodate this it is proposed to move the northern part of Ryde East (north of Great Preston Road and Arundel Road) into Ryde North East, and then to make consequential amendments to the rest of the Ryde area in order to maintain electorates within the +/-10% tolerance.
- 9.4. This will involve moving the boundary between Ryde North West and Ryde North East to run directly down Dover Street; the boundary between Ryde North West and Ryde West to run along Argyll Street; the boundary between Ryde West and Havenstreet, Ashley and Haylands to run along Playstreet Lane and Partlands Avenue; and the boundary between Binstead & Fishbourne and Ryde North West to run along the defined boundary at the rear of the properties in Spencer Close and Buckland Gardens.

- 9.5. Ryde is an older town, with clearly defined housing patterns radiating out from the centre of the town, which includes larger, older houses often converted into multiple units of accommodation, older terraced and semi-detached houses, and more modern housing estates. Given the areas which some of these homogenous housing types cross, it has proved difficult to divide Ryde along community lines whilst respecting geographical features.
- 9.6. The member for Ryde East put forward a case for not dividing the area known as Elmfield along Great Preston Road and Arundel Road, which would have involved the Pennyfeathers development being removed from Ryde East and joined instead with one part of Ryde South (to the east of the railway line). However, it was considered that whilst this suggestion had its merits, it was not desirable to divide Ryde South, as whilst the area is clearly bisected by the railway line, the two parts of Ryde South face each other across the valley created by the Monktonmead Brook and share characteristics in terms of housing type. The two sides of the valley are linked by a road which is “St Johns Road” to the west of the railway, and “St Johns Hill” to the west, with the station in the centre also sharing the St Johns name.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Binstead and Fishbourne | 1 | 2,746 | -2% | 2,751 | -4% | 2,946 | 2% |
| Havenstreet, Ashley and Haylands | 1 | 2,866 | 3% | 2,869 | 0% | 3,037 | 6% |
| Ryde East | 1 | 2,874 | 3% | 4,362 | 52% | 3,061 | 6% |
| Ryde North East | 1 | 2,636 | -5% | 2,636 | -8% | 3,100 | 8% |
| Ryde North West | 1 | 2,867 | 3% | 2,915 | 1% | 3,100 | 8% |
| Ryde South | 1 | 3,077 | 10% | 3,094 | 7% | 3,094 | 8% |
| Ryde West | 1 | 2,813 | 1% | 2,845 | -1% | 3,134 | 9% |

10. Proposal Detail - Brading, St. Helens and Bembridge

10.1. Brading, St. Helens and Bembridge form the eastern-most division on the Isle of Wight, and comprises of Brading Town Council and the two Parish Councils of St. Helens and Bembridge. This division is the only multi-member division on the Island, and is served by two elected members.

10.2. The multi-member division has proved unpopular with electors and elected members alike, and whilst this type of division is not uncommon on the mainland, the principle of one member per division has become established on the Island since 1995, and at each local election since 2009 the Electoral Services Office of the Council has had to field calls from electors in the area questioning whether they should really be allowed to vote for more than one candidate, and, indeed, from electors from other areas querying why electors in this division should get twice as many votes as in the rest of the Island. Electors, generally, seem to

prefer only having one point of contact at member level when dealing with Council matters.

10.3. The proposal is to divide this Division into two single-member divisions, with one division formed of Brading Town and St. Helens Parish Council, and the other formed solely of Bembridge Parish Council. This proposal has the support of both current elected members of the Isle of Wight Council, and of Bembridge Parish Council who have written directly to the LGBCE to confirm this. This proposal will regularise electoral arrangements across the whole of the Island, provide consistency for electors and members, and will allow members to forge yet stronger links with their respective Parish and Town Councils.

10.4. This proposal will mean that the division of “Brading and St. Helens” will be 3% under the Island average, but the proposed “Bembridge” division will be 14% over the average. Given the level of local support for this proposal, the authority believes that this imbalance can be justified as it reflects community identity and is conducive to effective and convenient local government.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brading, St Helens and Bembridge | 2 | 6,069 | 9% | 6,089 | 6% | N/A | N/A |
| Brading & St Helens | 1 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 2,803 | -3% |
| Bembridge | 1 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 3,286 | 14% |

11. Proposal Detail – The Bay Area

11.1. This area comprises the two Town Councils of Sandown and Shanklin, separated by the Parish Council of Lake, and is often known as “The Bay”. It comprises of the electoral divisions of Sandown North, Sandown South, Lake North, Lake South, Shanklin Central and Shanklin South.

11.2. Given that the projected variances for the Lake and Shanklin divisions are well with the +/- 10% tolerances sought by the LGBCE, the proposal for these four divisions is that they should remain unaltered. Although the Parish of Lake is bisected by a division boundary, this is unavoidable given the large electorates in the area, and has, in the preceding ten years, been accepted locally.

11.3. The two Sandown divisions display an imbalance, with Sandown North predicted to be 15% under the average electorate by 2024, whilst the figure for Sandown South is 5% over the average.

11.4. In order to correct this imbalance, the proposal is to adjust the boundary which runs, for the most part, along the rear boundaries of properties to the north of Station Avenue. This boundary was unchanged at the previous boundary review in 2008, and an adjustment to the boundary to take part of it along the rear of

properties to the south of Station Avenue will provide a correction to the electorate figures.

11.5. We had considered simply drawing the line along the middle of Station Avenue, but it was argued by one of the two local members that each section of Station Avenue (where it is bisected by the roads running South-West to North-East) forms its own distinctive micro-community and that a boundary running down the centre of the road would divide these communities. It could be postulated (although there is no evidence available to support the theory) that the existing boundary was drawn in its current position to reflect these micro-communities, so maintaining these communities is justified.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lake North | 1 | 2,901 | 4% | 2,904 | 1% | 2,904 | 1% |
| Lake South | 1 | 2,958 | 6% | 2,958 | 3% | 2,958 | 3% |
| Sandown North | 1 | 2,434 | -13% | 2,452 | -15% | 2,668 | -7% |
| Sandown South | 1 | 3,008 | 8% | 3,020 | 5% | 2,804 | -3% |
| Shanklin Central | 1 | 2,889 | 4% | 2,903 | 1% | 2,903 | 1% |
| Shanklin South | 1 | 2,979 | 7% | 3,039 | 6% | 3,039 | 6% |

12. Proposal Detail – Rural East Wight

12.1. The rural part of the Island to the east and South-East of Newport is very rural in nature, and is defined by the two electoral divisions of “Arreton & Newchurch” and “Godshill & Wroxall”

12.2. Both of the divisions are comprised of two Parish Council areas, which give their names to the divisions. Both of these electoral divisions are within the accepted tolerances of +/- 10%, and there are no proposals to change them in any form.

| Name of ward | Number of cllrs per ward | Electorate 2018 | Variance 2018 | Electorate 2024 | Variance 2024 | Electorate 2024 after changes | Variance 2024 after changes |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Arreton and Newchurch | 1 | 3,049 | 9% | 3,117 | 8% | 3,117 | 8% |
| Godshill and Wroxall | 1 | 2,643 | -5% | 2,666 | -7% | 2,666 | -7% |