

From: [Hendry, Angela](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI Acknowledgment
Date: 22 June 2022 09:28:00
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

FOI Ref: 78011/22

Thank you for your request for information, dated 20 June 2022, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

Can you please send me the document “Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion in single- and multi-member wards - LGBCE (21-22)089“ and any associated documents

The Commission aims to respond promptly and within the statutory deadline of 20 working days set by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please expect a response by **15 July 2022**.

In some cases a fee may be payable and if that is the case I will let you know. A fees notice will be issued to you, and you will be required to pay before I will proceed to deal with your request.

If you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me on the details provided below. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Privacy Statement

When we receive a complaint from a person we make up an electronic file containing the details of the complaint. This normally contains the identity of the complainant and any other individuals involved in the complaint.

We will only use the personal information we collect to process the complaint and to check on the level of service we provide. We do compile and publish statistics showing information like the number of complaints we receive, but not in a form which identifies anyone.

We will keep personal information contained in complaint files in line with our retention policy. This means that information relating to a complaint will be retained for three years from closure. It will be retained in a secure environment and access to it will be restricted according to the ‘need to know’ principle.

Similarly, where enquiries are submitted to us we will only use the information supplied to us to deal with the enquiry and any subsequent issues and to check on the level of service we provide.

Emails - Any email sent to us, including any attachments, may be monitored and

used by us for reasons of security and for monitoring compliance with office policy. Email monitoring or blocking software may also be used. Please be aware that you have a responsibility to ensure that any email you send to us is within the bounds of the law.

You can find out more about how we collect and use personal information here (<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/privacy>). If you don't want us to handle your information, please email us to let us know.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Hendry
Office Manager and HR Lead

1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL



The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



How are we doing? Click [here](#) to give us your views.

From: [Hendry, Angela](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI Response 78011/22
Date: 11 July 2022 09:54:00
Attachments: [LGBCE \(21-22\)089-EDI-SingleAndMultiMemberWards-2021-09-23.docx](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Dear [REDACTED]

FOI Ref: 78011/22

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which we received on 20/06/2022.

You requested:

Can you please send me the document “Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion in single- and multi-member wards - LGBCE (21-22)089” and any associated documents

Please find attached the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in single-and multi-member wards which was considered by the Commission at its Board meeting in September 2021.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me, quoting the reference number above in any correspondence.

If you wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to:

Lynn Ingram
Director of Finance & Resources
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Kind regards

Angela Hendry

Angela Hendry
Office Manager and HR Lead
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL



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LGBCE (21-22) 089

Response to Centenary Action Group Letter

Report to	Commission Board Meeting on 23 September 2021
Subject	EDI in single and multi-member wards – LGBCE approach 2020/2021
From	EDI Working Group
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Suggested Approach2. Proposed Guidance Changes3. Letter received from the Centenary Action Group
For info	The Commission Board is invited to note the contents of the report and offer any observations it may have.

Background

1. LGBCE was approached by the Centenary Action Group regarding single member wards and links to women's representation in local government.
2. The matter has been discussed in our EDI group resulting in a statement (attached at Appendix 1), some amendments to our guidance and actions to amend parts of our Full Council briefing pack

Recommendation

The Commission is asked to note the suggested approach and amendments suggested to our guidance

LI 14/09/21

Appendix 1 – LGBCE Objectives

To place on record that:

- There are sound reasons for being able to make judgements, on a case-by-case basis, on the mix of multi and single member wards.
- The Commission welcomes approaches that enable those with protected characteristics to stand and serve as Councillors whatever the combination of multi and single member wards.

Context:

- Fawcett Society (who have coordinated for the Centenary Commission on women's suffrage) suggestion that the Commission avoids single member wards to encourage more female Councillors with caring responsibilities.
- Commission EDI statement and equalities duties.
- Our role as set out by Parliament.

Suggested Approach:

Recognise that it is a responsibility of Local Authorities and Political Parties to facilitate those with protected characteristics to stand and to serve.

- 1) Clarify the objective of equality of opportunity to stand for election for all those with protected characteristics. Includes, but not confined to, females with caring responsibilities.
- 2) The ambition of equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics should apply equally to single and multi-member wards. E.g., Single MP per constituency.
- 3) Set out the positive reasons why the number of Councillors per ward can vary.
- 4) As part of the Commissioner meeting with Leaders, mention that once the pattern of wards is decided and the mix of single and multi-member wards is known, the Commission hopes that the Council will treat the review as an opportunity to consider how it promotes a rich diversity in those who stand and serve as Councillors e.g., Councillors who may need support or cover.

Appendix 2

4.48 There is no upper limit in legislation regarding the number of councillors that may be returned from each ward or division. However, we take the view that wards or divisions returning more than three councillors results in a dilution of accountability to the electorate and we will not normally recommend a number above that figure. There are currently no principal authority wards or divisions in England returning more than three councillors.

4.49 Arguments have been made in the past that if all wards or divisions in an authority return the same number of councillors this helps the local electorate to understand and therefore engage with local government. The 2009 Act states that, when reviewing councils, we have to take account of the scheme for elections used by the council when making our recommendations. In some councils, all councillors are elected at the same time; once every four years. Others elect a third of the council in each of three years out of four (elections by thirds), or half the council every two years (elections by halves). The legislation says that we should have regard to the desirability of recommending that the appropriate number of councillors is returned from each ward: where councils elect by thirds this is three, and where elections are by halves, two.

4.50 In each review of local authorities that elect by thirds or by halves we will aim to deliver such patterns of multi-member wards. However, in all cases this consideration will not take precedence over our other statutory criteria, and we will not recommend uniform patterns in the number of councillors per ward or division if, in our view or as is shown in evidence provided to us, it results in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality, does not reflect communities or hinders the provision of effective and convenient local government. However, in each case, such evidence needs to be provided on a ward by ward basis.

4.51 In addition, we may conduct a review at the request of any authority which elects the whole council every four years (or has resolved to do so) and wishes to move to a uniform pattern of single-member wards or divisions across the authority. In conducting any such review, we are required to have regard to the desirability of securing single-member wards or divisions. This means we must assess whether it is appropriate – taking into account our statutory requirement to achieve good levels of electoral equality, reflect community identities and interests and provide for convenient and effective local government – that each ward or division should be represented by one councillor. If, in our judgement, the statutory criteria cannot be met by providing a uniform pattern of single-member wards or divisions, it is open to us to recommend multi-member wards or divisions.

4.52 For those authorities which hold whole-council elections and do not request a single-member ward review, we are able to propose any combination of single-, two-, and three-member wards. -Some contributors to past reviews of local authorities that hold whole-council elections have argued that multi-member wards provide, in principle and practice, greater effectiveness and convenience than do single-member wards. Others have argued the reverse. Our decisions about the number of councillors per ward will be firmly based on our assessment of the evidence as it relates to our statutory criteria: electoral equality, convenient and effective local government, and community identities and interests. ~~consideration of this issue will be aided by evidence of benefits to electors, not benefits to local political organisations as well as being firmly based on our statutory criteria, when proposals which are based either on a preference for single or multi member wards are presented.~~

Appendix 3



CI UK, Camelford House
87-90 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7TP
swirsky@careinternational.org

Jolyon Jackson CBE
Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

19th April 2021

Dear Mr Jackson,

We are writing to you to express our concern about the proposed creation of more single-member electoral wards, both as a result of boundary reviews and the recommendations from the 'Best Value' report into Liverpool City Council.

We are a cross-party coalition of over 50 organisations and activists campaigning together to eradicate the barriers that prevent women in all their diversity from taking part in politics in the UK.

Research conducted by the Fawcett Society in 2019 shows that women are already underrepresented in local government, with women making up just 35% of local councillors. 96% of councils remain male-dominated, and only 7% of councils have maternity policies in place for all councillors. Even those councils that have maternity policies do not currently have a mechanism for maternity cover, and voters in single member wards will be left without representation for long periods of time if their councillors need to take maternity leave, or other leaves of absence related to caring or illness. In multi-member wards the workload can be shared with ward colleagues, ensuring that voters are never without representation in local government.

We believe that for the reasons outlined above women and others with caring responsibilities are less likely to put themselves forward for selection as candidates in single member wards, and that they are also less likely to get selected for these positions. Creating more of these inflexible single-member wards will be a backwards step in female representation in local government, which has been almost static in recent years.

We therefore strongly urge you to implement ward arrangements with more than one member whenever possible in any future boundary changes.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Pankhurst, Convener, Centenary Action Group
Olga Fitzroy, Pregnant Then Screwed
Bee Rowlett, Wollstonecraft Society
Kathryn Bole, Disability Labour