

BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Monday 23 June 2014 at 5.00 pm in Training Room 5/6, AFC Telford Learning Centre, Wellington, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors R Sloan (Chair), K Blundell, E Carter, I Fletcher, A McClements, R Overton and P Watling

IN ATTENDANCE: J Eatough (Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services), P Griffiths (Democratic Services Manager) and P Smith (Democratic Services Team Leader)

BRC-1 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

BRC-2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

BRC-3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

BRC-4 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – HADLEY & LEEGOMERY PARISH WARDING : FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services that contained the proposed final recommendations following a review of ward boundaries in Hadley and Leegomery Parish.

At its last meeting, the Committee agreed to commence a Community Governance Review following a request from Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council to correct an error that had arisen in the boundary between Hadley Castle and Leegomery wards by restoring the boundaries agreed following the last review of warding arrangements in the Parish in 2009. Unfortunately, this anomaly had been incorporated into the recent Electoral Review for Telford & Wrekin by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). Following the publication of the Terms of Reference and Draft Proposals documents for public consultation, one submission had been received from Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council, a copy of which was appended to the report. This reiterated the Parish Council's desire to see the ward boundary corrected in time for the 2015 elections.

The Final Proposals document attached to the report concurred with the request and submission, and recommended that the most appropriate ward boundary between Hadley Castle and Leegomery wards be that shown on the attached Map 2. This

reflected the boundaries agreed at the 2009/10 Community Governance Review of the Parish, and would see approximately 430 electors in Hadley being returned to the Hadley Castle Parish ward. If the final recommendations were adopted, the Council would then publish a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order, effective for the 7 May 2015 Parish elections, and formally request the LGBCE to make a Related Alterations Order.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the Order to give effect to the LGBCE's final recommendations following its recent Review of Electoral Arrangements in the Borough of Telford & Wrekin had been delayed and had not yet been laid before Parliament. Until these parliamentary approvals had been obtained, the Council would not be able to progress the necessary legal and administrative processes to implement the final recommendations of this Community Governance Review. It was therefore suggested that recommendation 2.2 in the report be amended to reflect this situation.

Members were supportive of the final proposals, given that this had been requested by the Parish Council in order to correct an anomaly in the ward boundary, and that there were no objections.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the Final Recommendations , as shown in the document attached to the report and at Map 2, be adopted and published;**
- (b) that, subject to the necessary parliamentary approvals being passed, a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order be published by the Council, effective for the 7 May 2015 Parish elections, and that then a formal request be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to make a Related Alterations Order.**

BRC-5 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – LILLESHALL, DONNINGTON & MUXTON PARISH : FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & People Services, appended to which was the suggested Final Proposals in response to the petition for a Community Governance Review (CGR). The CGR had been triggered following the submission of a valid petition calling for a separate parish to be formed for the Lilleshall ward of Lilleshall, Donnington & Muxton Parish Council.

The Draft Proposals agreed by the Committee, and published in February 2014, recognised that Lilleshall appeared to fulfil the technical and legal requirements to form a separate Parish. However, in order to assist in making a final recommendation, it was agreed to hold a ballot of Lilleshall electors to determine their views on a separate Parish. The result, based on a 53% turnout, was 320 in favour of a separate Lilleshall Parish and 259 against. Subsequently, a counter petition opposing any change in parish arrangements was received, signed by 553 electors. A copy of the petition was attached to the report along with the submissions received following the publication of the draft proposals.

The Final Recommendations were for the creation of a separate Lilleshall Parish Council returning 7 Parish Councillors. This was a finely balanced recommendation, based on the fact that Lilleshall fulfilled the tests required for the formation of a separate Parish, together with the consultation responses received since the Review commenced. A number of responses had been received opposing change together with a substantial counter petition. However, greater weight had been attributed to the result of the poll of electors, which had given the community an opportunity to express their views in a secret ballot carried out under election rules.

During the ensuing debate, Members acknowledged that this had been a difficult Review with strongly held views in the community both for and against the proposal for a separate Parish Council. During both this and the earlier CGR, a number of petitions had been submitted on both sides, but these often overlapped in terms of signatories and had provided no clear guidance as to the views of the broader Lilleshall community. The Committee were in agreement that the result of the secret ballot of all Lilleshall electors, based on a good turnout, was the most accurate gauge of local opinion and that this did give the proposal for a separate Parish a democratic mandate. In response to questions about the processes that would need to be followed to establish a new Parish in time for the May 2015 elections, the Assistant Director advised that there would be a transition process during which some form of steering group or 'shadow' council would be needed to work on the setting of a budget and Council Tax precept for Lilleshall prior to the elections. Members accepted that, based on the advice of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, seven councillors was the appropriate democratic representation for the new Parish Council.

RESOLVED - that the Final Recommendations, as shown in the document attached to the report, be adopted and published.

The meeting ended at 5.23 p.m.

Chairman:

Date: