

BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Wednesday, 13 April 2016 at 6.00pm in Meeting Rooms G3/4, Addenbrooke House, Telford

Present: Councillors R J Sloan (Chairman), R A Overton (Vice Chairman), K T Blundell, N A Dugmore, A J Eade, I T W Fletcher, K R Guy, and G C W Reynolds

In Attendance: J Eatough (Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement & Commissioning), P Griffiths (Elections Specialist) and D Moseley (Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team Leader)

BRC-06 Apologies for Absence

None.

BRC-07 Declarations of Interest

None.

BRC-08 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on 30 November 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman

BRC-09 Phil Griffiths

The Chairman reported that this would be the last meeting to be attended by Phil Griffiths, who would be leaving the Council in June. He thanked him for all his work for the Council and particularly for the support he had provided to the Boundary Review Committee.

BRC-10 Parliamentary Boundary Review

The Elections Specialist gave a verbal update on the arrangements for the Review of Parliamentary Boundaries. He informed the Committee that the Boundary Commission expected to produce detailed guidance over the summer with the initial proposals for new boundaries published in the Autumn of 2016. In order to inform the proposals, the Boundary Commission would refer to the electorate numbers taken from the electoral register data supplied by each authority; these figures had been circulated as part of the agenda paperwork. At this stage it was unclear which authority areas would be included in the relevant sub-region but the Boundary Review was unfettered by political constraints and elector numbers would be a driving factor with the numbers for each constituency falling within 5% of the stated electoral quota. The figures supplied did not demonstrate a significant difference since the abandoned review in 2013 and it was, therefore, likely that the proposals would be similar. It was difficult to see what alternatives there were based on the statistics and the implication was that some Borough Wards could be divided across constituencies, which was not ideal for electors. Members were asked to note the target figures of 78,507 for the largest constituency electorate permissible and

71,031 for the smallest and that Telford fell short of this at 64,816. The electoral specialist confirmed that there would be no allowance for growth in the initial stages with the Review being based upon figures from December 2015.

The Chairman confirmed that he had discussed the potential timeline with the Leader of the Main Opposition and the Committee would need to meet again in October or November in order to make a recommendation to the Full Council meeting on 24 November 2016. The Chairman also noted that Individual Electoral Registration had hit electoral numbers in some areas, like Birmingham, quite hard whereas this Authority and Shropshire had maintained their numbers. He noted that local Wards had been split in the past and Members would need to be kept informed.

It was **AGREED** that

- (a) the Boundary Commission's detailed guidance will be circulated to Committee Members following publication; and
- (b) potential dates for the next meeting will be circulated before the summer recess.

BRC-11 Community Governance Reviews

The Chairman reported that himself and the Elections Specialist had met with representatives of Donnington & Muxton Parish Council and Newport Town Council and engaged in email correspondence with Chetwynd Aston Parish Council to ascertain their position on Community Governance Reviews and to explain the Council's position with regard to resources and timing. The Chair advised that a petition would be forthcoming from Donnington & Muxton Parish Council but the position for Newport Town Council and Chetwynd Aston Parish Council was more complicated as it related to a proposed housing development on a triangle of land at the boundary of Chetwynd Aston which Newport Town Council argued would be served by Newport. The Chair expressed the opinion that it was important that any proposals were led by the residents' wishes and changes were not imposed upon them unnecessarily. Councillor Eade asked for details of the precept value of the houses being built in the area under contention.

Members welcomed the opportunity to improve boundaries around St Georges Sports & Social Club and Humber Lane, Donnington.

The Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement and Commissioning reminded the Members that Reviews were subject to guidelines based upon three main principles, including community identity. Discussion took place on whether the guidelines and statutory guidance were sufficient to inform the potential forthcoming Reviews or whether a Policy would have more weight. The Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement and Commissioning impressed upon Members that it was important that any Reviews were managed during 2017 to take effect in May 2019, due to resource implications.

The meeting ended at 6.35pm

Chairman:

Date: