

BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Monday, 28 February 2022 at 6.00 pm in The Telford Room, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford TF3 4NT

Present: Councillors K T Blundell, N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, A D McClements, R A Overton, G C W Reynolds and D Wright

In Attendance: A Lowe (Associate Director: Policy & Governance), P Griffiths (Elections Team Leader) and S Yarnall (Democracy Officer (Scrutiny))

Apologies: None.

BRC43 Election of Chair

Following a vote it was, **RESOLVED that** - Councillor Wright be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

BRC44 Appointment of Vice-Chair

Following a vote it was, **RESOLVED that** - Councillor McClements be appointed as Vice Chair.

BRC45 Declarations of Interest

NONE.

BRC46 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

BRC47 Update on the Borough Boundary Review

The Chair opened the item and stated that their thoughts are with the people of Ukraine who are fighting for their right for democracy; it was important to recognise this given that the meeting was related to the democratic process and members of the public were encouraged to be part of that democratic process by getting involved.

The Chair invited the Elections Team Leader to provide an update on the Borough Boundary Review. The Committee heard a summary of the review being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The population projections outlined by the LGBCE estimated an electorate of 147,000 by 2027; the LGBCE had previously decided that the council should operate with 54 members.

The Council had made a submission during the LGBCE's first phase of consultation which was taken into account by the LGBCE when making their recommended proposals forwarding arrangements for the Borough. The Council was now required to comment on those draft proposals. It was open to the Council, organisations, individual members, political groups and members of the public to comment on the LGBCE's draft proposals.

Members heard that the LGBCE's draft proposals is based upon 33 wards with a 54 councillor base. Every ward in the Borough had some form of change proposed.

The Chair commented that, on the whole, the draft proposals from the LGBCE were reasonable but there were a small number of areas where improvements could be made. In response, the Committee felt that there was a need to participate in the next stage of the consultation and to present a further formal submission to the LGBCE. Officers were asked to carry out further work on reasonable warding arrangements in specified areas before reporting back to the Committee. Members recognised, and welcomed, the extension of the submission deadline that the LGBCE had made.

The discussions focussed on some key areas of the Borough where it was felt that the LGBCE's proposals did not reflect community identity. Officers reminded Members that any comments on the draft proposals needed to be consistent with the Council's original submission although changes could be made in order to accommodate the proposals put forward by the LGBCE.

Members generally agreed on the areas of re-examination outlined by the Chair and liked that public opinion/representation has an impact.

BRC48 Update on the Parliamentary Boundary Review

The Chair invited the Associate Director: Policy & Governance to provide the update on the Parliamentary Boundary Review being undertaken by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE), not to be confused with the LGBCE.

It was explained that the BCE was carrying out its second phase of the consultation and, so far as the Borough of Telford and Wrekin was concerned, no changes had been made following the BCE's initial proposals. It was pointed out that, despite the strength of opposition to the BCE's proposal to rename the current Wrekin constituency, the proposals had not changed and the BCE had retained the proposed name of Newport and Wellington.

Officers advised Members that the current phase of consultation being conducted by the BCE was by way of public meetings; those closest to the Borough were taking place in Birmingham, Stafford and Worcester with booking required to attend. Members were reminded that they and their local communities could make submissions to the BCE.

The meeting ended at 6.35 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday, 24 March 2022