



## **BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 6.00 pm in Southwater Room, Meeting Point House, Southwater Square, Telford, TF3 4HS**

**Present:** Councillors H Morgan (Chair), G C W Latham-Reynolds (Vice-Chair), K T Blundell, E M Callear, L D Carter, R A Overton and G Thomas

**In Attendance:** A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance), R Phillips (Service Delivery Manager: Legal & Democracy), P Griffiths (Elections Team Leader), M Wallace (Mayor & Member Support Officer) and S Yarnall (Democracy Officer (Scrutiny)).

#### **BRC6      Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **BRC7      Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

In relation to the Update on Parliamentary Boundary Review, Members asked for confirmation of whether the Hadley area would be included in the Telford Constituency. Officers advised that they would ensure this was clarified by the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

#### **BRC8      Community Governance Review for the Borough of Telford & Wrekin**

The Service Delivery Manager: Legal & Democracy presented the report which outlined the proposed Community Governance Review (CGR) and the draft Consultation Information Pack, following agreement, in principle, at the last Committee meeting that a CGR should be undertaken.

The Terms of Reference for the CGR had not changed substantively following the last meeting and there were few changes to the timeline that had previously been presented to members. The information pack summarised the method that would be adopted to undertake the review, as well as an FAQ guide for members of the public.



As part of developing the CGR and draft Consultation Information Pack, Officers worked with the Equalities and Diversity team to address how to engage with traditionally underrepresented groups. The CGR and Consultation Pack would also be circulated to partner organisations and representatives to gather as many responses as possible.

Members commented on the clarity of the information pack in relation to Council Tax. Members commented that the review would need to consider members of the public that were not technologically literate, but it was noted that in person events would also be held.

Members also asked if councillors could respond to the consultation, which was confirmed. A question was asked in relation to size of Town and Parish Councils and it was noted that a rationale would be needed to make any changes in this regard.

Following the presentation and questions, Members voted on the recommendations.

**RESOLVED – that:**

- a) **The Terms of Reference and consultation documents be published and the Community Governance Review be commenced; and**
- b) **The activities undertaken during the Community Governance Review to ensure the participation and engagement of traditionally underrepresented groups be noted.**

**BRC9 Polling Station Review**

The Director: Policy and Governance provided an update on the Polling Places, Districts and Stations Review. The review was required following the recent Parliamentary Boundary changes. A review had been undertaken following the Borough Boundary Review in early 2023 in anticipation of the May 2023 local elections. Proposed further changes would be reported back to the Committee.

**BRC10 Elections Act Update**

The Elections Team Leader provided an update on the recent changes arising from the Elections Act. The Election Team Leader provided some key dates of when changes were expected as part of the Act.



Some of the changes discussed were the inclusion of an ID requirement for postal votes due to come into effect from October 2023. Changes also proposed in relation to overseas voting and a ban on candidates and agents handling postal votes.

There would also be changes to how European Union (EU) residents would be able to both vote and stand in future elections, where they would be required to provide evidence that they were longstanding residents.

Further information on the proposed changes would be provided to the Committee when received from Central Government.

Members were informed that the last date for a General Election to be called was 28 January 2025.

The meeting ended at 6.25 pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** Thursday 16 November 2023