

BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Thursday 4 September 2025 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, Southwater One, Telford, TF3 4J

Present: Councillors G Luter (Chair), Z Hannington (Vice-Chair), M Boylan, N A Dugmore, N A M England, R A Overton and K Tonks.

In Attendance: A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance), R Phillips (Registrars, Public Protection, Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager) and P Starkey (Senior Democracy Officer (Scrutiny)).

BRC8 Declarations of Interest

None.

BRC9 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

BRC10 Community Governance Review 2025

The Director: Policy & Governance presented the Community Governance Review (CGR) report which outlined the outcomes of the second phase of the consultation process and presented proposals for adoption, retention and further consideration.

At its meeting of 13 February 2025, the Committee agreed to the commencement of the Community Governance Review in accordance with the Local Government Act and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 in respect of the Town & Parish Council arrangements within Telford and Wrekin.

The Committee heard that the review had been conducted in two phases, with the first phase of the consultation process running from 17 February 2025 until 14 April 2025, inviting ideas and comments on future arrangements. A total of 292 responses were received, comprised of 219 completed surveys and 73 emails. In addition, a further 8 emails were received requesting additional information.

At its meeting on 12 May 2025, the Committee agreed the draft proposal to put out to consultation. The second phase of consultation ran from 19 May 2025 until 14 July 2025 and focused on specific proposals that had been considered by the Committee and were subject to further consultation in accordance with legislation. As part of the second phase, more than 1,300

responses had been received. These responses had previously been presented to the Committee at its meeting on 30 July 2025 and were detailed again within the report at Appendix A.

The Committee heard that in response to previous feedback received regarding the clarity and organisation of the responses at the last meeting, the collated responses had been reorganised in a different format and were now sorted into area based upon the proposed Town and Parish Council which had been put forward as part of the proposals set out in the second phase of the consultation. It was noted that some submissions had been included in multiple areas where comments were applicable and some submissions were categorised as 'other' where they could not be attributed to a specific area.

Appendix A of the report set out all consultation responses which had been received by the Council in relation to the Community Governance Review, including emails and attachments to emphasise the Council's ongoing commitment to openness and transparency.

Appendix B set out the proposals that had been put forward during the second phase of the consultation process. Members heard that whilst there were no proposed changes to boundaries, there were changes to councillor numbers. For example, Muxton had increased from 5 councillors to 9 councillors, with Priorslee having a similar adjustment. For Wellington, although the number of councillors had remained unchanged, a recommendation was put forward to revise ward groupings to improve electoral equality.

Appendix C contained proposals that had been put forward for consultation following Committee consideration at the last meeting. These proposals largely related to retaining existing arrangements with specific examples including Chetwyn with 7 councillors, Edgmond and Ercall Magna with 13 councillors, Kynnersley with 5 councillors and Waters Upton with 6 councillors. It was highlighted that councillor numbers were informed by guidance set out by NALC and Aston University and whilst not a perfect reflection, the numbers aligned with the guidance available.

Appendix D set out updated proposals arising from the last meeting where officers had been asked to examine two specific areas. One such area was the Nedge where concerns had been raised about the effectiveness of existing councils. Several options had been presented to the Committee including retaining the current arrangements, the creation of two new parish councils made up of Hollinswood, Randlay & Stirchley and standalone Brookside, retaining Hollinswood & Randlay parish and creating standalone Stirchley and standalone Brookside or retaining Stirchley & Brookside and creating standalone Hollinswood and standalone Randlay. It was noted that a combined council for the area had previously been consulted on and had not been received well by respondents.

Another area under review was the wider Dawley area. Officers acknowledged the strength of feeling expressed by respondents as part of the consultation process and noted that some proposals made geographical sense. These proposals included creating a new Parish Council by adjusting

boundaries between Lawley and Overdale and Great Dawley to incorporate parts of The Gorge. Consideration had also been given to naming preferences as there was no existing parish ward named Dawley Hamlets. A proposed change to Madeley would involve taking on the Nightingale Walk ward to better reflect borough-level geographies and connections between Woodside and Dawley Hamlets.

The Committee had also asked Officers to look at Wrockwardine, Little Wenlock and Rodington. Following a review, the proposals now set out recommendations to retain Little Wenlock. Appendix B included a proposal to adopt plans for Wellington, which involved some movement into Wrockwardine and a merger between the existing Wrockwardine and Rodington Parish Councils.

Appendix E of the report contained maps, some of which remained unchanged from previous versions presented to Committee. The Director: Policy & Governance explained that whilst a high quality submission had been presented by the residents of Horton for a Parish meeting, national guidance indicated that areas already parished could not have a reduction in their level of local democracy.

The report set out the next steps and if the Committee agreed to undertake further consultation of the areas outlines in Appendix D, it would be asked to meet again to make its final decision in mid-October. Following that meeting, steps would need to be undertaken to complete a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations to ensure that they reflect updated Town and Parish Council arrangements.

The Committee expressed their thanks for the extensive work which had been undertaken by Officers and the engagement received throughout the consultation process.

Members asked questions in relation to the rationale behind proposed changes to councillor numbers, specifically where there had been a significant increase in certain areas and sought clarity on how these figures had been determined.

Members shared concerns regarding community identity, specifically in relation to proposals to move Admaston and Bratton into Wellington. It was highlighted that a significant number of residents identified the area as a village rather than an urban area. Concerns were also raised in relation to funding priorities with a large number of projects already taking place in Wellington, which could later have an impact on available resources for the Admaston and Bratton community. Additionally, future growth was expected in the area with around 2,000 homes proposed as part of the Local Plan suggesting that this would later impact the number of councillors.

Members also raised concerns relating to boundary definitions and the splitting of polling districts. Specific areas such as Muxton were highlighted for further consideration of the proposed boundary line and warding arrangements to better reflect traditional and newly developed communities.

Members welcomed the opportunity for further consultation on the proposals set out within Appendix D, particularly for the Nedge area and welcomed the inclusion of naming considerations for Dawley Hamlets. Members asked that further consultation be undertaken on areas such as Lightmoor where residents had expressed a preference to be associated with Ironbridge rather than The Gorge.

In response to the Committee's concerns, the Director: Policy & Governance highlighted the variability in determining councillor numbers, advising that whilst there was a legal minimum, there was no fixed formula linking electorate numbers to councillor numbers due to the differing nature of parish areas. Proposed increases in councillor numbers were made based on consultation feedback, guidance from NALC and Aston University and considerations around quorum and representation. It was highlighted that electoral quality had been assessed within individual Town and Parish Councils rather than across the Borough and that numbers were adjusted to ensure effective governance and to accurately reflect warding arrangements.

In response to concerns raised around boundary lines, the Director: Policy & Governance explained that boundaries were based on polling districts which occasionally lacked properties or clear physical features. It was confirmed that alternative proposals submitted during the consultation, such as the creation of new Parish Councils were available for the Committee to consider.

Upon being put to a vote, it was:

RESOLVED – that:

- a) the adoption of the proposals contained in Appendix B (those proposals to take forward following consultation) with the associated maps in Appendix E be approved;
- b) the adoption of the proposals in Appendix C subject to the amendments set out therein (those areas where it is recommended that the current arrangements should, largely be retained) with the associated maps in Appendix E be approved;
- c) the contents of Appendix D and associated maps in Appendix E in respect of those areas where further consultation might be required be noted;
- d) any further proposals which should be put out to consultation be confirmed; and
- e) the Monitoring Officer be delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the Boundary Review Committee, to make all necessary arrangements to allow for further consultation and to publish the relevant consultation documents.

The meeting ended at 6.44 pm

Chairman:

Date: Tuesday 4 November 2025