

BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Boundary Review Committee held on Thursday, 18 February 2021 at 6.00 pm in Remote Meeting

Present: Councillors C Cassar (Chair), N A Dugmore, E J Greenaway, V J Holt (Vice-Chair), A D McClements and R A Overton

In Attendance:

P Griffiths – Project Officer

A Lowe – Associate Director: Policy and Governance

BRC11 Appointment of the Chair

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor C Cassar be elected as Chair.

RESOLVED – that Councillor C Cassar be elected as Chair for the remainder of the meetings during the 2020/21 municipal year.

BRC12 Apologies for Absence

None.

BRC13 Declarations of Interest

None.

BRC14 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

BRC15 Terms of Reference

RESOLVED – that the Terms of Reference be approved.

BRC16 Borough Electoral Review

The Associate Director: Governance and Policy began by introducing Phil Griffiths to the Committee, and informed them that he had been employed by the Council to provide extra capacity and lead the borough electoral review as Project Manager.

The Associate Director: Governance and Policy gave a presentation to the Committee which outlined the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) plan for the review of the electoral arrangements for

Telford & Wrekin Council. The review had two stages, the first stage intended to explore what the optimum number of members needed to represent the borough would be and the projected size of the electorate in 2027. The second stage of the review would be concerned with the warding arrangements; including the number of wards, the ward boundaries and the names of ward, in the hopes of creating greater electoral equality in the borough.

The Associate Director: Policy and Governance advised that the rough timeline for this review was as followed:

- Submission made to the LGBCE by 16 April 2021
- Decision on Council Member numbers to be expected end of May 2021
- Consultation with stakeholders on warding arrangements undertaken by LGBCE between the end of May 2021 and early August 2021
- Proposed electoral arrangements likely to be received in summer 2022.

Members thanked the Associate Director: Policy and Governance for the presentation and bringing it to the Committee. Members asked for clarification on the number of years the projected growth of the electorate would be modelled on. The Associate Director: Policy and Governance confirmed that the projected electorate growth would be until 2027, however the submission had scope to include some variation (of roughly 10% or more) if it could be shown that there was likely to be a large housing development after 2027 in specific areas which could change the electorate size.

Members requested a map of the existing warding arrangements and the historic figures of the electorate. The Associate Director: Policy and Governance responded that this information had been sent out in the late afternoon, which included maps of the borough to ward level polling districts identified and maps to parish level with polling districts identified and electorate information for 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Members were concerned that the Council could find itself in a similar position as previously where the warding arrangements created a disparity due to new housing developments, such as in Lawley. The Associate Director: Policy and Governance recognised this concerned and confirmed that the Council's submission to LGBCE needed to include the pockets of predicted development and the projected population increase so that it can be evened out across the borough in order to avoid any electoral disparity.

Members asked how many stakeholder groups the Council could provide to the LGBCE as part of the consultation process, given that the recommended number of stakeholder groups for the size of Telford and Wrekin was between 300 and 500. The Associate Director: Policy and Governance responded that early conversations with the Community Engagement team at the Council suggested that they could provide a list of around 1000 community groups and stakeholders, however this needed to be refined to ensure they were relevant for the purpose of the commission.

The meeting ended at 6.25 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday, 18 March 2021