

AGENDA

Meeting: Electoral Review Committee
Place: Council Chamber - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date: Thursday 11 January 2018
Time: 12.30 pm

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718504 or email kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Membership:

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling	Cllr Christopher Newbury
Cllr Clare Cape	Cllr Ashley O'Neill
Cllr Richard Clewer (Chairman)	Cllr Jonathon Seed (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Gavin Grant	Cllr Stuart Wheeler
Cllr Ian McLennan	Cllr Graham Wright

Substitutes:

Cllr Peter Fuller	Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson	Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Nick Murry	Cllr Ian Thorn

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Public Participation

Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult [Part 4 of the council's constitution](#).

The full constitution can be found at [this link](#).

For assistance on these and other matters please contact the officer named above for details

AGENDA

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes** (*Pages 5 - 8*)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2017.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item.

Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on **4 January 2018** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on **8 January 2018**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **Electoral Review Update** (*Pages 9 - 10*)

To provide an update on the progression of the Electoral Review

7 **Work Programme**

16 January – Committee Workshop (provisional – if required)

25 January – Committee Meeting – Finalise Recommendations

7 February – Committee Meeting – Finalise Submission to Council

20 February (or extraordinary) – Council Meeting – Approve Submission to Commission

The Project Board will be scheduled to meet to periodically to ensure the requirements of the Committee are delivered by the project team.

ELECTORAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 DECEMBER 2017 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Christopher Newbury, Cllr Ashley O'Neill, Cllr Jonathon Seed, Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Graham Wright and Cllr Jacqui Lay (Present as Substitute)

1 Election of Chairman

Nominations were sought for a Chairman of the Electoral Review Committee for the period of the electoral review. Following a proposal from Councillor Jonathon Seed, seconded by Councillor Jacqui Lay, it was,

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Richard Clewer as Chairman.

2 Election of Vice-Chairman

Nominations were sought for a Vice-Chairman of the Electoral Review Committee for the period of the Electoral Review. Councillor Jonathon Seed was nominated by Councillor Richard Clewer, seconded by Councillor Ashley O'Neill, and Councillor Gavin Grant was nominated by Councillor Graham Wright, seconded by Councillor Clare Cape.

Following a vote, it was,

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Jonathon Seed as Vice-Chairman.

3 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Ian Blair-Pilling and Ian McLennan.

Councillor Blair-Pilling was substituted by Councillor Jacqui Lay.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

5 Chairman's Announcements

There were no announcements.

6 Public Participation

There were no public in attendance.

7 Electoral Review - Council Size Submission

In response to notification from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England of the intention to undertake an electoral review of Wiltshire Council, the Electoral Review Committee was established to progress the review on behalf of the Council, and to formulate recommendations for any submissions to be made to the Commission.

A report was received from Ian Gibbons, Director of Legal and Democratic Services, outlining the reason for the electoral review and the process to be followed. The preliminary stage of the review would run until March 2018 and would determine the overall size of Wiltshire Council, and the second stage would then consider the boundaries of the number of divisions decided upon. The report also outlined the main areas that would be considered by the Commission in making their judgement on council size, being the governance arrangements of the council, its scrutiny functions, and the representational role of councillors.

The Committee discussed the data that would need to be collected and assessed for the review in order to make a recommendation on council size, including forecasts on electorate numbers and details on the council's present and planned governance arrangements. In respect of details on the representational role of councillors, it was agreed to circulate a series of questions from the Commission's guidance on council size submissions on the subject to all councillors to canvass their views. This and other data would be considered at workshop meetings for the Committee on 20 December 2017 and 3 January 2018.

Details were also sought on the process undertaken during the last review, which took place in the run up to the creation of the unitary council in 2009.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the actions taken to date as detailed in the report;**
- 2) To note the two distinct parts to the electoral review - council size (preliminary stage) running until March 2018 and consideration of division boundaries from May 2018 to March 2019;**
- 3) To agree the approach in developing the Council's submission on council size including the collection and presentation of data, working with the Commission's representatives and publicity as detailed in the report; and,**
- 4) To agree the timetable of activity for the Committee to direct the project as detailed in Minute 8.**
- 5) To circulate questions in relation to the representation role of councillors to all members of the council.**

8 Work Programme

The following meeting schedule was agreed by the Committee:

20 December 2017 - Committee Workshop
3 January 2018 - Committee Workshop
11 January 2018 - Committee Meeting
25 January 2018 - Committee Meeting
7 February 2018 - Committee Meeting

(Duration of meeting: 1.40 - 2.05 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott of Democratic Services,
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Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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Wiltshire Council

Electoral Review Committee

11 January 2018

Electoral Review Update

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the progression of the Electoral Review.

Background

2. On 15 September Wiltshire Council was notified by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England ('the Commission') of its intention to carry out an electoral review of the Council in its 2018/19 work programme. This was because 25 of the electoral divisions in Wiltshire had a variance from the average division greater than 10% and 2 had a variance of more than 30%.
3. On 17 October 2017 Full Council established the Electoral Review Committee ('the Committee') to progress the review on behalf of the Council, and to formulate recommendations on any submissions to be made to the Commission during the review process.
4. On 12 December 2017 the Committee held its inaugural meeting, agreeing a timetable for consideration of data and preparation of a submission for the preliminary stage of the review process, to determine what council size should be adopted for the next elections in May 2021.

Main Considerations

5. When making its judgement on council size the Commission consider three broad areas:
 - ***governance arrangements of the council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities.***
 - ***the council's scrutiny functions relating to its own decision making and the council's responsibilities to outside bodies.***
 - ***representational role of councillors in the local community and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the council on local partner organisations.***
6. The Committee held two workshop sessions on 20 December 2017 and 3 January 2018 to discuss data gathered in order to define the three areas as detailed above.
7. As a result the following information was considered:

- The council's existing executive, regulatory and council governance arrangements, including committee numbers and membership, frequency and duration of meetings, delegation arrangements, community area arrangements, attendance levels, numbers of candidates for election and outside bodies.
 - The council's scrutiny functions, including outcomes from peer reviews, numbers and arrangement of committees, overview and scrutiny activities and planning, and level of involvement with executive decisions and level of involvement of all councillors with scrutiny activities.
 - Representational role of councillors, including how much time councillors spend on specific activities, engage with their electorate and the council and other ways of working.
 - Population, Housing and Electorate figures at present and forecasts for 6-7 years.
 - Details of statistical neighbouring local authorities.
8. The Committee also requested two surveys of councillors to obtain some of the information above, and that council staff be informed of the review, and given the opportunity to comment.
9. The timetable agreed by the Committee on 12 December 2017 identified the following meetings for additional work:
- 11 January – Committee meeting – Initial formulation of recommendations
 - 25 January – Committee meeting – Finalise recommendations
 - 7 February – Committee meeting – Finalise submission to Council
 - 20 February (or additional extraordinary) – Council meeting – Approve submission to Commission
10. Data updated following consideration and comment at the Committee Workshops will be circulated in due course.

Proposal

11. The Committee is therefore asked to consider the data presented during the workshop sessions and surveys to date, and determine potential council size options arising from that data.

Ian Gibbons, Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Report Author: Kieran Elliott, 01225 718504, kieran.elliott@witlshire.gov.uk

Background Papers

Technical Guidance - <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/policy-and-publications/guidance>