

Electoral Review Committee

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2020 AT ONLINE MEETING.

Present:

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

31 **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

32 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2020 were presented for consideration, and it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign as a true and correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2020.

33 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

34 **Chairman's Announcements**

It was noted that following Full Council's approval of the Committee's Final Recommendations for the Community Governance Review 2019-2020, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had provided required consent to the decision, and a Legal Order had now been formally Made.

The LGBCE had therefore been requested to amend the Electoral Divisions of Bowerhill/Melksham East and Pewsey/Pewsey Vale West to align with the parish boundaries.

35 **Public Participation**

In response to public comments it was confirmed the Community Governance Review proposals relating to Rowden Hamlet being transferred to Chippenham had been approved as part of the Legal Orders confirming the decision of Council, but that Council had agreed to recommend the Committee further

review the precise boundary at a future date to determine if the concerns of local residents could be addressed. Any changes proposed from such a review, if any, would not take effect until at least 2025.

36 **Polling District and Polling Place Review**

A report was presented by Caroline Rudland, Head of Electoral Services, detailing proposed changes to polling districts. These took account of changes made as a result of the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council affecting Unitary Divisions and the Community Governance Review affecting parish boundaries. The details would be published alongside the updated Electoral Register on 1 December 2020.

The Committee discussed the report and presentation and raised a number of potential anomalies in polling districts and with polling places, including in Melksham, Calne and Malmesbury. In response to queries it was confirmed further changes could be made if necessary or appropriate where anomalies or other issues were identified.

The Committee requested all Members be provided access to maps of the incoming polling districts, so that any concerns could be raised directly with officers and resolved if possible and appropriate.

On the motion of Councillor Richard Clewer, seconded by Councillor Gavin Grant, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To approve Appendix A detailing the revised polling districts to each of the new unitary divisions in unitary division order;**
- 2) **To approve Appendix B detailing the revised polling districts to each of the parishes in parish/parish ward order;**
- 3) **To approve Appendix C detailing all the revised polling districts and the allocated polling station and any relevant comments;**
- 4) **To approve Appendix D detailing the additional polling districts required in the event the LGBC do not amend the Electoral Divisions before 1 December 2020;**
- 5) **To request the Director of Legal and Governance provide access to polling districts mapping to Members, to enable identification of any errors or anomalies.**

37 **Area Board Boundary Review 2020**

The Chairman presented a report on the consultation on the Draft Recommendations of the Committee for the Area Board Boundary Review 2020. The consultation ran from 10 September 2020 – 31 October 2020, with 108 responses received.

Most responses had been supportive of the proposals, including around Southern Wiltshire/Amesbury. It was noted that there had been some

comments in objection from parishes in the Marlborough and Melksham/Devizes area objecting to proposals, such as Seend and Froxfield, but it was noted that a Unitary Division could only be in a single Board, and not to transfer the parishes involved would include leaving many more parishes in an arrangement the Committee considered unsuitable.

The Chairman also noted there had been some comments confusing the recent Unitary Division changes with the proposals for the Area Board proposals, and in relation to proposed substitution arrangements in Marlborough.

The Committee also discussed the names of Area Boards and agreed to recommend to Council proposals from Chippenham Area Board to be known as Chippenham and Villages Area Board. It was also stated that the area listed in the recommendations as South East Wiltshire was most commonly known as Southern Area Board, and it was agreed to recommend to Council it be referred to accordingly.

Considering the report including consultation comments, the Committee did not agree it should otherwise amend its Draft Recommendations.

On the motion of Councillor Clewer, seconded by Councillor Grant, it was,

Resolved:

To delegate the preparation of a Final Recommendations document to the Director of Legal and Governance after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, for consideration by Full Council.

38 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 12.00 - 12.45 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott, Senior Democratic Services Officer. of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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