

AGENDA

Meeting: Electoral Review Committee

Place: Kennet Room - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Date: Tuesday 7 May 2024

Time: 2.00 pm

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Lisa Alexander of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01722 434560 or email lisa.alexander@wiltshire.gov.uk

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

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Membership

Cllr Ashley O'Neill (Chairman)

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling

Cllr Allison Bucknell

Cllr Ernie Clark

Cllr Jacqui Lay

Cllr Ian McLennan

Cllr Paul Oatway QPM

Cllr Ian Thorn

Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Substitutes:

Cllr Adrian Foster

Cllr Peter Hutton

Cllr Nic Puntis

Cllr Ricky Rogers

Cllr Derek Walters

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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.

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AGENDA

Part I

Items to be considered when the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2024.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

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

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5 **Public Participation**

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 29 April 2024 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 1 May 2024. 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 **Community Governance Review 2023/24** (*Pages 13 - 16*)

To receive a report from the Director – Legal and Governance.

7 **Date of the Next Meeting**

To note the date of the next scheduled meeting, if needed, as 26 June 2024.

8 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

Part II

Items during consideration of which it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed.

Electoral Review Committee

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 APRIL 2024 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Ashley O'Neill (Chairman), Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Ernie Clark, Cllr Jacqui Lay and Cllr Paul Oatway QPM

10 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Stuart Wheeler
Cllr Ian Thorn

The Committee noted that Councillor Ian McLennan was in attendance virtually (non-voting).

Cllr Jacqui Lay was held up in traffic and joined the meeting at the start of Item 6.

11 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2024 were presented for consideration, it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes as a correct record.

12 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

13 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

14 **Public Participation**

No statements or questions were submitted.

15 **Community Governance Review 2023/24**

The Chairman provided details of the background of the ongoing Community Governance Review and presented a report on the consultation on the Draft Recommendations which took place from 12 February to 18 March 2024, and

was then extended until 28 March 2024, which included a public meeting for the Mere and Zeals area.

For each recommendation the Chairman along with officers presented summaries of the responses to the consultation and issues that had been raised, before the Committee discussed the available options and determined what action to take.

Recommendation 1 – Mere/Zeals

Recommendation 1 had proposed changes to the boundary of Zeals Parish Council and Mere Town Council, to transfer a triangular field area which currently sat within Zeals, between the B3092 & A303 slip road, to Mere.

The site contained an area of land which had planning permission for business use, the Hill Brush Factory and Visit Hillbrush visit centre and one dwelling. There was also planning permission for a 70-bed care home on the site.

The Committee discussed their draft recommendation in the context of the representations which had been received.

It was noted that no response had been received from the resident of the single dwelling within the area of land it was proposed be transferred.

In discussion the Committee considered that it continued to believe that, on balance, the electors within triangular area which included a dwelling and permission for a 70-bed care home would most likely identify with the community of Mere than to Zeals, given its proximity and position on the in-road to Mere and access to the services and facilities there.

The Committee noted that people living in the areas under review tend to consider where they live based on features on the ground, such as street lighting. The site in question was a good example of this as heading out of Mere towards Zeals, street lighting stop after the site, which supported by representations, gave the impression that the site was already a part of Mere.

Considering all of the responses, and noting the vibrant public interaction received from Zeals and Mere residents and the parish and town councils during the review, the character of the area, lying between two main roads and on the historic approach into the town, whose built up area was adjoining the site, the Committee agreed that the draft recommendation met the statutory criteria and therefore upheld its recommendation.

Recommendation 2 – North Bradley

Recommendation 2 had proposed a change to the boundary of North Bradley Parish Council and Trowbridge Town Council, to transfer an area south of the A363, where existing properties accessed from Woodmarsh/Westbury Road were transferred to North Bradley, leaving the incoming expansion of housing

and the open space which formed part of the development, with the town.

The Committee considered the consultation responses, which were all in agreement.

There had been no direct response from the Parish or Town Council during the consultation, however the Committee noted that the proposal had come from the Town council.

The Committee also discussed a proposed amendment which had been submitted in response to the consultation, which proposed moving the boundary line to incorporate part of the open space linked to the new housing development, from Trowbridge into North Bradley. The Committee had considered this option when making the draft recommendation and had rejected it, noting that the open-space area was part of the development site and was a provision linked to the houses which were in Trowbridge. It did not consider the representation provided sufficient reasons to change their view.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed that the draft recommendation met the statutory criteria and therefore upheld its recommendation.

Recommendation 3 – Salisbury

Recommendation 3 had been to amend the boundary of Salisbury Milford ward and Salisbury St Francis ward to transfer two properties which due to an anomaly were placed in the incorrect divisions.

No further information had been received and the Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 4 – Royal Wootton Bassett/Brinkworth

Recommendation 4 had been to amend the boundary of Brinkworth Parish and Royal Wootton Bassett Parish regarding a dwelling and farm buildings, which were felt to be more aligned with Brinkworth than Royal Wootton Bassett.

No further information had been received and the Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 5 – Clyffe Pypard and Broad Town

Recommendation 5 had been to amend the boundary of Clyffe Pypard Parish and Broad Town Parish regarding two properties at Broadtown Hill, currently divided between the parishes of Broad Town and Clyffe Pypard.

The Committee considered the consultation responses, including a response from the resident of the dwelling it was proposed to move from Clyffe Pypard to Broad Town.

The resident stated that they felt connected to Clyffe Pypard, which was a rural and dispersed community. They believed there would be no community governance benefit in a boundary change and that they had nothing in

common with Broad Town. As part of the representation other areas where pockets of dwellings separated by the boundary were highlighted, suggesting that 103 and 101 Broadtown Hill were not the only instance in the parish where closely situated dwellings were in different parishes.

The Committee discussed the access to the dwelling via Broad Town and whether there would be benefits in terms of governance and community cohesion. Taking account of the representations received they agreed that to move the boundary to transfer 103 Broadtown Hill from Clyffe Pypard to Broadtown did not provide significant enough governance or community improvements under statutory criteria and therefore withdrew its recommendation.

The Committee then discussed two separate areas as set out in representation P6 in Appendix B of the report which had been highlighted as having dwellings of a similar split nature across a parish boundary and agreed to seek further information from Elections to establish the exact nature of which electoral divisions the dwellings were currently in, but to take no further action in respect of the community governance review.

Recommendation 6 – Chippenham (Ray Close)

Recommendation 6 had been to amend the boundary of Chippenham Town Council in relation to Ray Close which was split across Chippenham Pewsham and Chippenham Hardens & Central Divisions, to correct an anomaly and unify properties in Ray Close which were split between two divisions.

The Committee considered the Chippenham Town Council response which was in agreement to the recommendation and confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 7 – Trowbridge (Frampton Court)

Recommendation 7 had been to amend the boundary of Trowbridge Town Council in relation to Frampton Court which was split across Trowbridge Grove and Trowbridge Lambrok.

The Committee noted that both unitary division members were in agreement with the recommendation and that no further responses had been received.

The Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 8 – Calne

Recommendation 8 had been to amend the boundary of Calne Town Council and the existing Calne Without Parish Council, in relation to a development area to the south the town of Calne which extended just over the boundary into the Calne Without. The transfer would unify the development and part of a single property.

The Committee noted that Calne Without had indicated support at pre-consultation and that no further responses had been received.

The Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 9 – Wilcot, Huish and Oare

Recommendation 9 had been to amend the boundary between Wilcot, Huish and Oare Parish and West Overton Parish, to address an anomaly which had been highlighted by Elections, relating to a single property at the far north of the parish separated from any community or access within the parish itself.

The Committee noted the survey responses, from each parish council, where opinion was divided, with Wilcot Huish and Oare in disagreement, and Kennet Valley in agreement with the recommendation.

In addition, there had been a response in disagreement from the resident concerned.

The local division member highlighted the strong disagreement of Wilcot Huish and Oare parish council that they felt they had not been consulted at the start of the review; however, it was clarified that as the request had been submitted by the Elections team during a later stage of the review process as a minor anomaly, there had not been the availability to consult any earlier.

Following discussion, and taking account of the strong representations from the local resident in particular, the Committee agreed to withdraw its recommendation.

Recommendation 10 – Bradford on Avon

Recommendation 10 had been to amend the boundary of Bradford on Avon Town Council, to address an anomaly which had been highlighted by Elections, relating to a single property in Kingston Road, which was in the Bradford-on-Avon North ward and Division, with all other properties in Kingston Road in the South ward and Division.

The Committee noted that no further responses had been received and confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 11 – Melksham

Recommendation 11 had been to amend the boundary of Melksham Town Council between Melksham Forest division and Melksham South Division to transfer properties in a block of flats in Bolwell Place which due to an anomaly were split between two divisions.

The recommendation also sought to amend an anomaly which had been brought to light, where a polling district line but not the unitary line formed the boundary between the High Street and Lowbourne Road addresses. The proposal would aligning the unitary boundary to the addresses by moving a small area from Forest ward to South ward.

The Committee considered the written response and noted that there had been no objection from Melksham Town Council.

The Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Recommendation 12 – Westbury and Dilton Marsh

Recommendation 12 had been to amend the boundary between Westbury and Dilton Marsh to correct an anomaly at the area of Millstream Cottages in Westbury, where the boundary line did not follow the stream as it appeared was intended and ran cut through one dwelling.

The Committee confirmed their proposal for recommendation to Full Council.

Additional Areas

The Committee then considered additional anomaly requests which had been submitted since the last meeting.

Area 13 - Melksham

Melksham Town Council had raised an anomaly in Coronation Road, where it appeared the opposite sides of the street were in different divisions.

The Committee agreed to conduct a short consultation on a draft recommendation to move the boundary to unify both sides of Coronation Road within one division.

Area 14 - North Bradley

North Bradley Parish Council had raised an anomaly regarding the boundary between Southwick Parish Council and North Bradley Parish Council. The anomaly related to the boundary line around the areas of Scotland and Ireland which appeared to run through the middle of the settlement. A map was shown indicating an option to unify the settlements.

The Committee was advised that North Bradley Parish Council was due to meet to consider the boundary review for the area and would provide a response following that meeting.

The Committee agreed to delegate to the Director Legal & Governance in consultation with the Committee, to form a draft recommendation following consideration of the Parish Council response.

Where the Committee had made additional draft recommendations, it was agreed to undertake a shorter online consultation and to consider them further at their next meeting.

It was therefore,

Resolved:

As set out in the report, to delegate to the Director, Legal and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman, the preparation of a detailed Final Recommendations document for consideration of Full Council (Recommendations 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,10,11) and preparation of an

**Additional Draft Recommendations document for consultation
(Recommendations 13,14).**

16 **Parish Name Change**

Clyffe Pypard Parish Council submitted a request to change the name of their parish to Clyffe Pypard and Bushton, to reflect the communities which make up their parish.

A public survey was held to gather responses, of which 44 were received. 36 of the responses were in support of the requested name change and 8 were against.

The request was considered to be reasonable and appropriate, and the Committee agreed to recommend the change to Full Council for approval request at its next meeting.

It was then,

Resolved:

To recommend to Council that Clyffe Pypard Parish Council change its name to Clyffe Pypard and Bushton Parish Council.

17 **Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 8 May 2024.

18 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.55 am)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Lisa Alexander of Democratic Services, direct line 01722 434560, e-mail lisa.alexander@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Wiltshire Council

Electoral Review Committee

7 May 2024

Community Governance Review 2023/24 – Consultation on Additional Draft Recommendations

Purpose

1. To consider responses to the consultation on the Additional Draft Recommendations of the Committee as agreed at the meeting on 3 April 2024.

Background

2. A Community Governance Review is a process whereby a principal authority can adjust the governance arrangements of parishes within its council area. This can include amending the number of councillors or wards, the external boundaries, or even the creation/merger/abolition/grouping of entire parishes.
3. The Electoral Review Committee (“the Committee”) has delegated authority from Full Council to oversee any review process in accordance with paragraphs 2.10.7-2.10.9 of Part 3B of the Wiltshire Council Constitution. This would include setting the scope for any review, its methodology and timescales, as well as preparing recommendations for consideration by Full Council.
4. At its meeting on 26 June 2023, the Committee approved areas for a review to take and delegated approval of terms of reference. This was published in September 2023.
5. Following withdrawal of some requests for review, the parishes specifically included within the Review were: Winterbourne, Laverstock & Ford, Firsdown, Idmiston, Durnford, Mere, Zeals, North Bradley, Trowbridge, Chippenham, Salisbury, Lacock, or any parishes surrounding those listed, and any issues involving those parishes.
6. There was also provision to consider minor alterations to other parishes not listed if considered appropriate. These were not subject to detailed pre-consultation surveying, owing to their minor nature. Where the committee determined there may be grounds for correction of a potential boundary anomaly, it contacted those parishes when a draft recommendation was made.
7. During the first phase of the review additional proposals for the areas set out in Paragraph 5 were received from parishes or other parties. Where these were received before the pre-consultation phase began, they were included within the pre-consultation information gathering. The information gathering also included:
 - Sessions between representatives of the Committee and affected unitary members and parishes;
 - An online survey of received proposals, with over 125 responses received;
 - Details of emailed representations.

8. In preparing any recommendations and making any decision the Committee and Full Council must take account of the statutory criteria for reviews and the need to ensure that community governance within the areas under review:
- Reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and
 - Is effective and convenient.

9. Council tax precept levels would not be a valid criterion to approve or disapprove of a proposal.

Main Considerations

10. During Stage One of the Review additional proposals for the areas set out in Paragraph 5 were sought. During Stage Two the Committee undertook pre-consultation information gathering as detailed in paragraph 7.

11. The Committee considered all information at its meeting which concluded on 9 January 2023, and prepared draft recommendations for consultation. Recommendations were made for the following areas:

Mere, Zeals, North Bradley, Trowbridge, Salisbury, Brinkworth, Royal Wootton Bassett, Clyffe Pypard, Broad Town, Chippenham, Calne, Calne Without, West Overton, Wilcot, Huish and Oare, Bradford-on-Avon, Melksham, Westbury.

12. A consultation was therefore held initially from 12 February 2024 – 18 March 2024. Where the Committee proposed to transfer electors from one parish to another, a letter was sent to those potentially affected. A briefing note was also circulated.

13. A public meeting was held on 18 March in Mere for the changes in that area. Due to the date of the meeting the consultation survey was therefore extended before that meeting to last until 28 March 2024.

14. 26 representations were received in total to the Draft Recommendations consultation.

15. The Committee withdrew its draft recommendations relating to Clyffe Pypard/Broad Town, and for Wilcot, Huish, and Oare/West Overton It confirmed all its other recommendations for consideration by Full Council.

16. The Committee received details of additional requests or issues relating to internal boundaries in Melksham, and for the boundary at Southwick and North Bradley parishes.

17. It resolved to make provisional draft recommendations for consultation.

18. A consultation was launched on 10 April until 5 May. Both parish councils were informed in advance of 10 April, as well as on that day and with subsequent reminders.

19. All residents proposed to move from one Melksham Town ward to another were written to directly. All residents in the area currently divided between Southwick and North

Bradley – known as Scotland and Ireland – were written to directly on two occasions, dated 10 April and 24 April.

20. Details of responses received to the consultation will be published in an agenda supplement ahead of the meeting of the Committee on 7 May 2024.

Safeguarding Implications

21. There are no safeguarding implications.

Public Health Implications

22. There are no public health implications.

Procurement Implications

23. There are no procurement implications.

Equalities Implications

24. There are no equalities implications.

Environmental and Climate Change Implications

25. There are no environmental implications.

Workforce Implications

26. There are no workforce implications.

Financial Implications

27. Additional consultation, if requested, could incur additional resources, in particular in relation to the cost of using an external provider to physically mail out to those affected in certain areas if appropriate.

Legal Implications

28. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives the Council the power to undertake CGRs and sets out the criteria for such reviews. There is also statutory guidance on the conduct of such reviews that the Council would have to comply with.

Risks

29. A failure to consult appropriately on proposals from the Committee or provide appropriate reasoning for any decision to change governance arrangements would be potentially vulnerable to challenge.

Options

30. The Committee may confirm its additional draft recommendations for consideration by Full Council, it may remove some recommendations and refer the remainder to Full Council for consideration, or it may amend its recommendations. If amending its recommendations, the Committee would need to undertake additional consultations before Full Council could consider approving those recommendations.

Proposal

31. That the Committee consider the responses to the Additional Draft Recommendations consultation.
32. To delegate to the Director, Legal and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman, the preparation of a detailed Final Recommendations document for consideration by Full Council, and/or preparation of any Additional Draft Recommendations for consultation and the details of that consultation.

Perry Holmes - Director, Legal and Governance

Report Author: Kieran Elliott, Democracy Manager (Democratic Services), 01225 718504, kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

26 April 2024

Appendices

None

Background Papers

[Draft Recommendations](#)

[Additional Draft Recommendations](#)

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

[Terms of Reference of the Electoral Review Committee](#)

[2023/24 Review terms of reference](#)