

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

**6TH OCTOBER 2015 AT 5.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Chairman), C. Allen-Jones (Vice-Chairman), H. J. Jones, M. Thompson, L. J. Turner and S. A. Webb

Officers: Mrs. C. Felton, Ms. C. Flanagan and Ms. R. Cole

1/15 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor J. M. L. A. Griffiths be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

2/15 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor C. Allen-Jones be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the ensuing municipal year.

3/15 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. C. R. Mallett and K. J. May. Councillor S. A. Webb was present as a substitute for Councillor May.

4/15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

(Councillor C. Allen-Jones requested that it be noted that he was a District Councillor for the Belbroughton and Romsley Ward which included land within the area of Clent Parish).

5/15 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 26th March 2015 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 26th March 2015 be approved as a correct record.

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES TO CLENT AND HAGLEY PARISH COUNCIL AREAS**

The Chairman reminded Members that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the Final Recommendation for a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order to be made by the Council. This was the next stage in the Community Governance Review (CGR) for proposed boundary changes to Clent and Hagley Parish Council areas. The CGR had been instigated by a valid petition.

The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services reminded members of the background to the CGR which this Council as "Principal Authority" had been undertaking since October 2014.

It was reported that at the previous meeting of the Committee it had been agreed to adopt a draft recommendation to alter the Parish boundary as proposed by the petition. Since that decision, further stages of the Review had been undertaken including further consultation on the draft recommendation had taken place between 1st April and 30th June 2015.

The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services drew the Committee's attention to the "Final Recommendation" which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. Members were reminded that whilst the results of the further consultation ballot indicated support for the proposed changes, this was only one element of the matters to be considered by this Committee in making recommendations to the Council in relation to the CGR.

It was reported that the Final Recommendation included the Council's statutory duties in undertaking a CGR (as set out in section 3.3 of the report) in particular, the need to ensure that the community governance within the area under review reflects the identities and interests of the community in that area, and is effective and convenient.

The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services confirmed that if the Final Recommendation was agreed there would be a need for consequential matters to be agreed with the Parish Councils concerned and to seek a related alteration to the District's Ward Boundaries if the Order was made.

Following the presentation of the report members raised a number of issues including:

- Why the response to the second consultation was numerically lower than the first consultation.
- Whether the impact of likely changes in terms of numbers of residents within the Parish would affect the viability of Clent Parish Council.
- Why land was included within the proposal which contained few or no residential properties.

There was detailed discussion on the matter and the Committee considered the information contained within the Final Recommendation; taking into account the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the guidance, together with the results of the initial consultation exercise and the outcome of the consultation on the draft recommendation.

It was therefore

**RECOMMENDED**

- (a) that following consideration of the Final Recommendation contained in Appendix 1 to the report and in the light of the statutory criteria, an Order for the Reorganisation of Community Governance in Hagley and Clent under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, be made by the Council; and
- (b) that Authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to finalise the Order and the consequential arrangements to be agreed between the Parish Councils, and to seek a related alteration to the District Ward boundaries from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

The meeting closed at 5.35 p.m.

Chairman