

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE**

**3RD JUNE 2024, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella, E. M. S. Gray, K.J. May, S. T. Nock,  
S. R. Peters and J. Robinson.

Officers: Mr D. Whitney and Ms M. Bassett.

1/24 **ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Councillor Nock proposed, Councillor K. May seconded and it was

**RESOLVED** that

Councillor E.M.S. Gray be elected Chairman of the Committee for the  
2024/25 Municipal Year.

2/24 **ELECTION OF A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL  
YEAR**

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that

The election of the Vice-Chairman of the Committee be deferred until the  
next meeting of the Committee.

3/24 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF  
SUBSTITUTES**

There were no apologies for absence.

4/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5/24 **TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE HELD ON 23RD  
FEBRUARY 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 were submitted  
for Members' consideration.

**RESOLVED** that

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

6/24

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**  
**BOUNDARY REVIEW FOR BROMSGROVE - WARDING PATTERNS**

Members considered a report providing details of the review of electoral boundaries in the District being conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

The LGBCE had recommended that the Council size remain at 31 Councillors. The next stage of the review was to propose the electoral ward boundaries and it was suggested that the Council make a submission to the consultation. Officers pointed out that if the Council decided not to make a submission, then Councillors would not be able to input into the review other than as individuals.

Changes were required as seven of the current electoral wards varied from the average number of electors in District wards in 2030 by more than plus or minus 10%. Officers explained data used in arriving at the forecast figures. In response to a query from a member, the Senior Electoral Services Officer reported that the wards were:

Alvechurch Village – minus 11%  
Avoncroft – plus 21%  
Catshill North – minus 15%  
Catshill South – minus 12%  
Hagley West – plus 17.55%  
Lickey Hills – minus 10.96%  
Perryfields – plus 45%.

Proposals for ward patterns could be made to the LGBCE between 24 July and 30 September. The LGBCE had confirmed it would be prepared to receive a draft submission by the closing date if the Council was not able to confirm its response until the Council meeting in October. Members queried whether the LGBCE would be prepared to do this if a major change to the submission was agreed by the Council at that meeting.

Officers had proposed that a Working Group be set up to carry out the review as that would enable agile working and flexible attendance. It would report to the Committee with proposals and the Committee would then present recommendations to Council for consideration as appropriate.

During consideration of this item, Members expressed concern at the demands on members because of the timescale for the Working Group, which was due to begin its work in July and finish during September. As a General Election had been called, members suggested that the LGBCE could be asked to amend their timetable to take account of that. However, it was noted that any delay in the process would probably

impact on the overall timetable and risk curtailing the time available for implementing the final changes.

In terms of process, it was clarified that the consultation referred to in the report would be carried out by the LGBCE. It was intended that the proposed Working Group would prepare a draft submission which the Council as a whole could consider and amend or endorse. It would look in detail at the wards where a variance from the average number of electors in 2030 of 10% was forecast. Officers suggested that each meeting of the Group would be invited to look specifically at a few wards, which would enable ward members to attend and contribute their local knowledge to the discussion. Officers would use mapping software to support the discussion at Working Group meetings.

Members discussed the proposed size and composition of the Working Group, aiming to keep the involvement of Electoral Matters Committee members whilst ensuring it was not too large. It was agreed that the members of the Committee would be the members of the Working Group.

To maximise the time available for the review, it was suggested that the Committee should set the parameters for the Working Group at this meeting rather than leave this for consideration at its first meeting. However, Officers offered to produce a scoping document for the first meeting of the Working Group for members' consideration and this was agreed.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1) A Working Group be set up to consider ward patterning for the Bromsgrove Electoral Review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England which will report back to this Committee;
- 2) The membership of the Working Group comprises the members of the Electoral Matters Committee, and
- 3) Officers produce a Scoping Document for consideration at the first meeting of the Working Group.

7/24

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - FINSTALL PARISH**

Members considered a report setting out the proposed terms of reference and timetable for a Community Governance Review, requested by Finstall Parish Council.

In response to a question, the Electoral Services Manager reported that appropriate local ward members had been informed of the request, but he had not received any feedback from them. The Committee noted that there had been some technical issues for one of the members involved, and it was suggested that in order to ensure the local members had

every opportunity to contribute to the discussion, the decision should be deferred.

The Electoral Services Manager added that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had recommended that if the Community Governance Review had not yet started, it should be postponed until after the ward boundaries review to avoid concurrent boundary considerations. The Committee therefore agreed that this item should be deferred.

**RESOLVED** that

Consideration of the Community Governance Review for Finstall Parish be deferred until after the completion of the review of District ward boundaries.

8/24

**TO CONSIDER ANY URGENT BUSINESS, DETAILS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED TO THE HEAD OF LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND PROPERTY SERVICES PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING AND WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE OF SO URGENT A NATURE THAT IT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING**

There was no urgent business on this occasion.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman