

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Wednesday, 25th March, 2009

Present: Cllr M S Worrall (Chairman), Cllr D J Aikman, Cllr N J Heslop, Cllr Miss A Moloney, Cllr M R Rhodes, Cllr A K Sullivan and Cllr D Thornewell.

Councillors Balfour, Mrs Simpson and Stone were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dobson (Vice-Chairman) and Evans.

**ER
09/001 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**ER
09/002 MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Review Working Group held on 11 November 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**ER
09/003 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2008: RESULTS OF CONSULTATION**

Further to Minute ER 08/003 the report of the Chief Executive presented the responses received in relation to the initial consultation on the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review of Parish Arrangements. It was noted that the support received thus far from electors and other stakeholders had been taken into account in developing three proposals for further public consultation. These related to the alteration of councillor representation on parish councils in line with National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommendations (with the exception of Wouldham Parish Council and Snodland Town Council); movement of the boundary between Ditton and East Malling and Larkfield parishes to follow the boundary with the former Reedpack site; and recommendations to the Electoral Commission to alter borough ward and county division boundaries to reflect the proposed changes at parish level.

A letter from Ditton Parish Council was circulated at the meeting requesting a review of the boundary with Aylesford to compensate for the loss of income arising from the proposed change in boundary with East Malling and Larkfield parish. The Working Group considered that

such a matter did not fall within the criteria for undertaking a boundary change. However, it was noted that the position regarding Ditton's future boundaries could be re-examined in the event of further significant development in the parish.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) the submissions made regarding the initial consultation, as set out at Annex 2 to the report, be noted;

(2) the three proposals set out at paragraph 1.3.1 of the report be endorsed and published for public consultation in accordance with the draft document at Annex 3 to the report; and

(3) all submissions received in response to public consultation be reported to the meeting of the Working Group to be held on 18 August 2009 in order that "Final Proposals" may be confirmed.

**ER
09/004**

BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND: FURTHER ELECTORAL REVIEW

The Chief Executive reported that the Boundary Committee for England had identified Tonbridge and Malling as potentially requiring a 'Further Electoral Review' within the next two years. Details were given of the criteria used in assessing the need for such a review. It was anticipated that both conditions in terms of electoral variance would be met by 2012 with disparities across the Borough becoming more prominent if there were no intervention.

Members were advised that a response had been submitted to the Boundary Committee for England agreeing the need for a review and requesting that it should not commence until after the Community Governance Review was complete. It was noted that an initial response from the Boundary Committee indicated that the review was unlikely to start before 2011 although the current timetable was subject to change.

RECOMMENDED: That the likelihood of the Boundary Committee for England undertaking a full review of borough ward and county division boundaries within the Tonbridge and Malling area be noted and timescales be reported to the Electoral Review Working Group as soon as they are made known.

The meeting ended at 2001 hours