

BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW – COUNCIL SIZE SUBMISSION

Item ER 21/3 referred from Electoral Review Working Group of 10 March 2021

The report of the Chief Executive provided an overview of the Boundary Commission Review process. Proposals regarding the future size of the Borough Council using an evidence base that analysed the operation of the organisation in recent years were also outlined.

Members gave careful consideration to the proposals set out in the report and discussed a number of options. Attention was drawn to the findings of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel in January 2017 which suggested that the Borough Council should pursue a reduction in the number of councillors. In addition, compared against other local authorities within the same CIPFA group it was evident that the Borough Council with 54 councillors was in the upper quintile.

In conclusion, and having regard to the evidence presented, it was felt that a figure in the region of 43 Councillors would be consistent with the change in governance and scrutiny arrangements since 2010/11 as well as the reduction in the size of Council expenditure and staffing. This reduction would also reflect current and future changes in work patterns and would be consistent with the level of Councillor numbers within the CIPFA group, especially when considering other reviews within the group since 2010/11.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the approach and conclusion to reduce the future size of the Council to 'in the region' of 43 Councillors, as set out in the report and summarised above, be commended to the General Purposes Committee.