

Minutes of the meeting of the **ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday, 16 May 2017 at 5.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor P A Watkins

Councillors: S S Chandler
M R Eddy
F J W Scales
P Walker

Also Present: Councillor B Gardner

Officers: Chief Executive
Director of Governance
Head of Democratic Services
Team Leader – Democratic Support

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

2 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members appointed.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members.

4 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 July 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 PROPOSAL FOR A REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

The Chief Executive presented the report on the Proposal for a Review of Electoral Arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

The Committee was advised that a proposal for a review had been under consideration in 2015 but had been put on hold during the development of proposals for a single East Kent Council. Following the decision by Shepway

District Council not to proceed with the single East Kent Council the proposals for a review were being revisited.

Initial discussions with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England had indicated that the Council could potentially have its electoral arrangements reviewed in time for the May 2019 elections by utilising the slot previously allocated for the electoral arrangements for a single East Kent Council.

Members were advised that if this opportunity for a review was not taken there would be no change to the Council's electoral arrangements before the May 2023 elections. In addition, the absence of scheduled elections for May 2018 meant that the Head of Democratic Services would have sufficient resources for the work supporting the review.

The Director of Governance advised that the proposed number of 30 – 35 councillors following an electoral review was only indicative and not intended to predetermine the outcome of a review. This was based on a national trend in respect of reduced Council size and reflected the reduced number of members at Canterbury City Council (39 members, population 159,965) and Shepway District Council (30 members, population 110,034) following their own electoral reviews in 2013.

Councillor F J W Scales advised that residents of Capel-le-Ferne had raised concerns with him over the current division of the village between the administrative areas of Dover District Council and Shepway District Council and he proposed that as part of the electoral review consideration be given to moving the small number of properties (approximately 20) located between the Battle of Britain Memorial and the Valiant Sailor public house into the Dover District, thereby ending the anomalous situation.

Councillor M R Eddy proposed amending the report recommendations to delete the words "30 to" from the recommendation and replace them with the word "around" as followed:

"That the Committee recommends to Council that an indicative size of council membership of around 35 be adopted for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England."

It was agreed to include the proposals of Councillors M E Eddy and F J W Scales and amend the recommendations set out in the report accordingly and it was

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Council:

- (a) That the Council requests the Local Government Boundary Commission for England proceed with an Electoral Review of this Council in 2017.
- (b) That it be recommended that an indicative size of council membership of around 35 be adopted for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- (c) That the Council requests the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at the same time as conducting an Electoral Review undertake a Principal Area Boundary Review with a view to removing the anomaly of the village of Capel-le-

Ferne being divided between the areas of Dover District Council and Shepway District Council. This anomaly would be resolved through reallocating a limited number of properties (around 20) between the Battle of Britain Memorial and The Valiant Sailor public house into the area of Dover District Council and consequential amendments to the County and Parish Boundary.

The meeting ended at 5.21 pm.