

BOUNDARY AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2017 at 4.30 pm at Austen Room, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillors Buckley, Crow-Brown, Savage, Stummer-Schmertzling, Taylor and Johnston.

In Attendance: Councillors Townend and Venables.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Buckley proposed, Councillor Johnston seconded and the Working Party agreed that Councillor Crow-Brown be the Chairman for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Constantine, for whom Councillor Johnston was present as a substitute.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations no interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Working Party agreed the minutes to be a correct record of the meeting that was held on 26 June 2015.

5. THANET ELECTORAL REVIEW

Mr Howes, Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer, introduced the item by providing a brief summary of the report and highlighting the three options available to Members.

During consideration of the item Officers made the following points:

- The proposal of 36 Members was based roughly on the ratio of residents per Member in the surrounding East Kent Councils.
- An indicative number of Members had to be submitted the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in order for the review to commence. If Members wished to agree option two of the report, they would need to provide an alternative indicative number.
- The LGBCE looked to keep communities together when ward boundaries were reviewed.
- Future population growth and plans should be considered as proposals needed to remain relevant for the following five to ten years.
- If an indicative figure of 56 Members was chosen, it could be seen as a sign that there was no intent to change the number of Members.
- The Council was required to propose the number of Members it wished to have to the LGBCE,

During consideration of the item Members made the following points:

- Areas with higher levels of deprivation required more support from Members. It would be overly simplistic to simply compare the ratio of population to Members across East Kent Councils to establish the number of Members that the Council should have.
- Over recent years Members had experienced an increase in workload, it was expected that this workload would continue to increase in the future.
- If there were less Members, there would be more chance of a hung Council.
- When a review took place it would be normal practice to use the status quo as a starting point.

It was proposed by Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing, seconded by Councillor Johnston and the Working Party unanimously agreed option two as detailed in the report, namely:

'To recommend that Council request the LGBCCE undertake an electoral review of TDC in 2018 with an alternative indicative size of council, and that the indicative size be approximately 56 Councillors.'

Meeting concluded: 5.05pm