

## **CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE – 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

### **CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Corporate Policy Committee**

- 1. approve the attached council size submission for recommendation to full Council; and**
  - 2. delegate authority to the Electoral Review Sub-Committee to make any further changes to the council size submission and related documentation prior to submission to the Boundary Commission.**
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Extract from the Minutes of the Electoral Review Sub-Committee meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

#### **11. CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW**

The Sub-Committee considered the draft council size submission for recommendation to the Corporate Policy. It also considered the final version of the electorate forecasting methodology report.

At an informal meeting of the Sub-Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023, members had considered and endorsed a report on the electorate forecast methodology and results. The final version of the electorate forecasting methodology main report, and its sister document Appendix 1, were now presented to the Sub-Committee for approval. Further proposed changes to the methodology report had been circulated to members following publication of the agenda. Officers advised that following feedback from the Boundary Commission, the forecast end date in the methodology report had been changed from December 2029 to January 2030; the change had no impact on the accuracy and interpretation of the forecasts.

At the informal meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, members had also considered and endorsed a first draft of the council size submission. Officers undertook to ensure that each subsequent draft of the submission would show clearly, by the use of tracked changes, any amendments agreed by members to the previous draft.

Members now considered a revised draft council size submission, showing those sections of the submission that had been added, deleted or changed since the Sub-Committee's meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. The submission included the results of a survey of all members regarding their workload. Further proposed changes to the submission had been circulated to members following publication of the agenda.

Officers advised that the revised submission stated that a reduction from the current council size of 82 was likely to result in unsustainable pressures on Members and that the current size of 82 members continued to reflect sufficient capacity in terms of members to electorate ratio and still provided sufficient room for growth.

Members agreed a number of amendments to the council size submission:

Agenda page:	Amendment
30	Insert: 'This model involves 80 of the 82 members of the Council serving on standing committees.'
32	Replace 'the Council has large committee memberships' with 'the Council has inclusive committee memberships'
37	Delete reference to a vacancy on the Southern Planning Committee.
38	Insert: 'The Borough also has (x) conservation areas and (x) SSSIs which further demonstrates the complexity of decisions taken by planning committees and places additional responsibilities on some ward members.'
43	Replace: The Council encourages residents to take up queries and complaints with officers, as opposed to directly with Members' with 'Residents are encouraged to contact the Council as appropriate.'
46	1 <sup>st</sup> sentence, replace: 'and its Members are frequently unable to serve and support residents, business and partner organisations effectively' with 'and its Members face frequent pressures on their workload in supporting residents, business and partner organisations'
78	Delete the sentence referring to discussions on a potential devolution agreement.

Members asked whether, once the Council had approved its recommendation on council size and had forwarded its submission to the Boundary Commission, there would be any scope or flexibility to adjust the council size figure if it became apparent during the subsequent review of warding arrangements that a different council size might be appropriate. Officers undertook to seek clarification from the Boundary Commission.

The Corporate Policy Committee would be recommended at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to approve the Council's draft council size submission for recommendation to full Council. A further meeting of the Sub-Committee was scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> November which would provide an opportunity to agree any further changes to the submission before it was presented to the Committee.

The Boundary Commission had asked for earlier sight of the draft submission and had agreed that the Council could provide the draft submission by 22<sup>nd</sup> November, the date

of publication of the agenda for the Corporate Policy Committee. Any feedback from the Commission prior to the Corporate Policy Committee's meeting would be reported to the Committee together with any comments by the Sub-Committee.

It was agreed that the Sub-Committee should seek delegated authority to make any further changes to the council size submission prior to the submission of the documentation to the Boundary Commission by the deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> December.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Sub-Committee

1. approves the draft council size submission for recommendation to the Corporate Policy Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023, subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting, and subject to any further content which may be brought to the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November;
2. approves the final version of the electorate forecasting methodology main report and its sister document, Appendix 1; and
3. agrees to seek delegated authority to make any further changes to the council size submission and related documentation prior to submission to the Boundary Commission.

**Note: the council size submission attached to this minute has been updated to incorporate all changes agreed by the Electoral Review Sub-Committee.**