

## **Community Governance Review Sub-Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 6 March 2020

**Report Title:** Community Governance Review: Pre-consultation Survey Responses and Next Steps

**Senior Officer:** Brian Reed: Head of Democratic Services and Governance

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### **1. Report Summary**

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the pre-consultation survey carried out across the Borough, and reminds members of the next steps and the process for proposal development.
- 1.2. Dr Melvin Humphreys will be available during the Sub-Committee session in order to provide an expert's opinion on the approach to date, and on the next steps of proposal development.

### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1. That the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee recommend to the Constitution Committee that the pre-consultation survey responses be acknowledged and the initiation of the Council's proposals for all wards be agreed.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1. The terms of reference for the Community Governance Review, as approved by the Constitution Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018, referenced the need for the Council to publish its plan for consultation during the review, including the receipt of submissions to assist in the preparation of draft proposals.
- 3.2. A period of pre-consultation was initiated on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019, and invited any person or body interested in the review to provide a response to a survey. The survey itself was live for a period of 14 weeks, having

formally closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> January, and the Council have received submissions from:

Individual	201
On behalf of a town/parish council	56
As an elected ward councillor	11
On behalf of a group, organisation or club	6
As a former elected ward councillor	1
On behalf of a local business	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>

Details of the responses received are provided in Appendix 1.

- 3.3. The preparatory data required to develop the Council's proposals has now been received, including:
- Electorate numbers taken from the 2019 electoral register;
  - The number of councillor seats representing each ward;
  - Wards where the respective town/parish council have requested a review within the last 18 months or so;
  - Electorate growth forecasts up to 2025 (the period advised by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England);
  - Pre-consultation survey submissions.
- 3.4 The data therefore includes all factors previously agreed as points of focus, which were:
- Known concerns expressed by parishes;
  - Wards with significant variances to the average population density and/or councillor ratios;
  - Local plan developments;
  - Known built-environment changes.
- 3.5 Subject to the approval of the Sub-Committee and Constitution Committee stage 2, as outlined in paragraph 5.1 will now commence. The proposal development, which is estimated to take several months, will need to address a proposed response for all wards, even if the recommendation is for no change. The draft recommendations will then be brought back to the Sub-Committee and Constitution Committee for approval, and to seek endorsement to initiate stage 3, as per paragraph 5.1.

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

4.1. No other options have been considered.

#### **5. Background**

5.1. As previously reported the review is being conducted in four phases:

- Stage 1 – Data gathering and identification of points of focus and a pre-consultation engagement, where initial submissions are invited.
- Stage 2 – Consideration of submissions received and draft recommendations are prepared.
- Stage 3 – Formal consultation on published draft recommendations
- Stage 4 – Adjust draft recommendations accordingly, with final recommendations being prepared to seek approval via Full Council.
- Review Closure – Publish final recommendations, amend/update relevant records and, if appropriate, undertake a resolution to make a reorganisation order.

#### **6. Implications of the Recommendations**

##### **6.1. Legal Implications**

6.1.1. These have previously been acknowledged by the Constitution Committee at its meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

##### **6.2. Finance Implications**

6.2.1. Any financial implications for town and parish councils will be known during the development of the proposals, when changes to boundaries are considered, which will therefore be reported back to Committee in due course.

##### **6.3. Policy Implications**

6.3.1. There are no direct policy implications.

##### **6.4. Equality Implications**

6.4.1. There are no direct equality implications.

##### **6.5. Human Resources Implications**

6.5.1. There are no direct HR implications.

## **6.6. Risk Management Implications**

- 6.6.1. Accepting the closure of the period of pre-consultation and the progression to proposal development is a necessary step to progressing the review and so any delay will have implications to the overall timetable.

## **6.7. Rural Communities Implications**

- 6.7.1. Any rural community implications will be known during the development of the proposals, when changes to boundaries are considered, which will therefore be reported back to the Committee in due course.

## **6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children**

- 6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

## **6.9. Public Health Implications**

- 6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

## **6.10. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.10.1. There are no direct implications for climate change.

## **7. Ward Members Affected**

- 7.1. All wards will be affected to some extent and will be included in the consultation process.

## **8. Consultation & Engagement**

- 8.1. Consultation and engagement are critical factors in this review process, in order to demonstrate the validity of any change proposals.
- 8.2. The first stage of consultation has now concluded, and highlights areas of focus for the Council. A second and formal period of consultation will be scheduled once the Council has completed the development of proposals. This will follow the requirements relating to the duty to consult electors and others during the CGR process as detailed in Section 93 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

## **9. Access to Information / Contact Information**

- 9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:
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