

# COUNCIL

5 SEPTEMBER 2017

## REPORT OF HEAD OF LEADERSHIP SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY

### A.5 ELECTORAL REVIEW OF TENDRING – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

(Report prepared by Karen Neath)

#### PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

##### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To report to Council the final recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) of a review of district wards, to update on Community Governance Reviews for Town and Parish Councils and to seek approval to undertake further work to put in place arrangements for a reduced council size in 2019.

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

###### **Final Recommendations for Tendring District Council**

- On 4<sup>th</sup> July the LGBCE announced the final recommendations for revised electoral arrangements in Tendring.
- The final recommendations are that Tendring District Council should be represented by 48 Councillors with 32 wards (18 single member, 12 two member and 2 three member wards).
- Details of the new wards are set out in the report attached at Appendix A.
- The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A Draft Order will be laid in Parliament and, subject to Parliamentary scrutiny, the new arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2019. The outcome of the Parliamentary scrutiny is expected in the autumn.

###### **Town and Parish Council Arrangements and Community Governance Reviews**

- In order to retain consistency between district and parish ward boundaries, the LGBCE has used its powers to recommend revised parish ward boundaries for Frinton and Walton Town Council and Harwich Town Council.
- The new proposed district warding arrangements leave a small anomaly in St Osyth where there is a small area North of St John's Road that is in the St Osyth District ward area but not in the St Osyth Parish area. For clarity and efficiency of electoral arrangements it is proposed that a Community Governance Review be undertaken to seek views on amending the parish boundary to bring it in line with the district boundary.
- Department of Communities and Local Government guidance states that it is good practice for principal councils to consider conducting Community Governance Reviews every 10-15 years. Given that a review of district boundaries has just been completed with a new forecast of electorate, it is appropriate and timely to consider whether to undertake reviews of local democracy i.e. at parish level across all of Tendring.
- As a first step all Town and Parish Councils have been written to by the Leader to seek initial views on Community Governance Reviews. Information has also been put out in a press release, on the Council's website and through social media to seek initial views from the public. Responses are sought by 27 October 2017.

- A further report will be brought back to Council to seek any formal decision to proceed with Community Governance Reviews in all or part of Tendring.

### **Preparation for 2019 Elections and Annual Council**

- Work now needs to commence on planning for the local elections in 2019 and for a new Council consisting of 48 Members.
- The changes to electoral arrangements will be undertaken between now and the elections taking place in May 2019.
- Additional work also needs to take place to accommodate the reduction from 60 to 48 Councillors. This includes consideration of the size, make-up and frequency of Cabinet, Committees and Council. Proposals on how this might look were included as part of the Council's submission on Council Size.
- Early consideration will be given to a review of scrutiny committees with the intention of implementing new arrangements from Annual Council in 2018.
- Work would also be required to amend the constitution to reflect any new arrangements.
- Officers are therefore seeking endorsement from Council to commence these strands of work.

### **Electoral Review Working Party**

- It is proposed that the Electoral Review Working Party be continued with amended terms of reference to consider any Community Governance Reviews and oversee the work to reduce the Council to 48 Members. The Leader is agreeable to this Working Party continuing.

### **Independent Remuneration Panel and Independent Persons**

- The Council currently has three people appointed to undertake both the role of Independent Remuneration Panel and Independent Persons for the purposes of Standards arrangements. They are appointed until Annual Council in 2019. It is proposed to ask the Independent Remuneration Panel to undertake a review of Members' allowances for recommendation to Annual Council in 2018 but at the same time commence a process to recruit an Independent Remuneration Panel and Independent Persons for Standards for formal appointment at Annual Council in 2019. It is likely that the review of Members' allowances leading up to Annual Council in 2019 will need a more radical overhaul as it will need to reflect the reduced number of Councillors and any new Cabinet / committee arrangements. This will entail reconsideration of both basic and special responsibility allowances. Therefore it may be the case that the old and new panels need to run in parallel for a period of time. Council will be advised if any such arrangements are proposed to be put in place.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended to Council that:-**

- a) the final recommendations on new electoral arrangements for Tendring District Council be noted;**
- b) a Community Governance Review be undertaken in relation to the land in the St Osyth District Council area but not in the St Osyth Parish area;**
- c) officers are authorised to commence a review of meeting arrangements, Cabinet and committee size, frequency and make-up in preparation for the**

**reduction to 48 Councillors in 2019.**

## **PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **DELIVERING PRIORITIES**

It is important that the arrangements for Town and Parish Councils allows for an appropriate level of electoral representation for residents across the District to ensure effective governance, decision making, and scrutiny.

### **FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK**

There would be some costs involved in undertaking the necessary consultations as part of any Community Governance Reviews but these are expected to be minimal.

Should there be any changes to the number of seats on any Town and/ or Parish Council then this could very well have ongoing cost implications for local elections and local council running costs.

### **LEGAL**

The LGBCE was established by and operates under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Chapter 3 of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 devolves the power for Community Governance Reviews to Principal Councils.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out the arrangements to be followed in relation to Members' allowances and expenses.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are none.

## **PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION**

None

### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** - Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Tendring District Council - Report