

**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting held: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

**Present:** Councillor Russell Roberts (Chair)  
Councillors Lloyd Bunday, Ian Jelley, Clark Mitchell, Mark Rowley  
Mick Scrimshaw and Lesley Thurland

**Also Present:** Councillors Maggie Don, Anne Lee and James Hakewill  
Graham Soulsby (Managing Director)  
Martin Hammond (Executive Director)  
Ian White (Electoral Services Manager)  
Anne Ireson (Committee Administrator)

**18.LGR.15 APOLOGIES**

None.

**18.LGR.16 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**18.LGR.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Russell Roberts declared a personal interest as a resident and parish councillor for Barton Seagrave.

**18.LGR.18 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW UPDATE**

The Managing Director reported that a decision from the Secretary of State was still awaited. The Easter recess had been shortened and a decision could be made either before or after the recess. As soon as a decision was made members would be notified.

## **18.LGR.19 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – PROCESS AND FORMAT**

A report was submitted which considered the process and scheduling for the above review and which sought agreement for a strategy for consultation.

Feedback was sought on how the consultation should be carried out based on

- What questions should be asked.
- Which boundaries should be looked at
- Warding arrangements in relation to the town of Kettering

It was noted that the last Community Governance Review had concluded that the boundary for the town of Kettering should be extended to embrace the whole of the urban extension at East Kettering; currently the parish boundaries ran through the centre of the urban extension.

During debate the following points were made

- The list of consultees should include the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner but was otherwise felt to be correct
- A mailshot to all properties would be expensive but the Council should use other methods to ensure a good response to the consultation was secured
- The consultation process should involve councillors, the press and local radio and links to the Council's website should be included in any press articles or notices

Members noted that conversations had already been held with Wellingborough and Corby Councils, which were also undertaking Community Governance Reviews with Wellingborough carrying out a light touch review and Corby following a similar timeline to Kettering.

On 8<sup>th</sup> April, the Government had laid down the necessary Statutory Instrument for European Elections to take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and this had now come into force. Discussion was held about the effect of the proposed European Elections on the review. It was noted that work on the elections had already begun and would impact on the capacity to carry out a Community Governance Review. In addition, Kettering's Returning Officer had also been appointed as the Regional Returning Officer. There was also the possibility of other unplanned electoral events later this year. The original timetable for the community governance review had therefore already been overtaken and a new timetable would need to be devised.

**RECOMMENDED** that

- (i) a revised timetable be drawn up and emailed to members.

- (ii) methods of consultation and individuals and organisations to be consulted, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be agreed, subject to the points made as outlined above.

## **18.LGR.20 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – PARISH BOUNDARIES**

A report was submitted which considered options in relation to determining the boundaries of a parished area covering the town of Kettering by giving consideration to the following criteria:

- Defining the area of the parish taking into account the key principles outlined in the DCLG/LGBCE guidance of community cohesion reflecting the identities and interests of the area, and effective and convenient community governance;
- Giving consideration to the impact on adjacent parishes in particular the issues defined in the agreed terms of reference that relate to the impact of planned developments due to take place over the next five years and beyond (in particular the East Kettering SUE).

The boundary between Cranford parish and Kettering unparished area was proposed to run along the Alledge Brook. Consultation on this boundary was carried out five years ago and the parish council had already indicated its agreement. The Review would also present an opportunity to tidy up various boundaries that weaved across the A14.

Discussion was held, using the maps provided, on the relationship between Barton Seagrave and Kettering and options for redrawing the boundaries were discussed. Three boundary options were presented which adjusted the northern and eastern boundaries of Barton Seagrave with Kettering.

It was felt that the houses to the east of Barton Road and north of Cranford Rd should be retained within all three of the options, with the boundary line redrawn along the backs of these houses. It was agreed to offer up these three options within the consultation.

**RECOMMENDED** that:

- (i) the expanded parished area for the town of Kettering be agreed, taking into account the key principles and comments made as outlined above; and
- (ii) having considered the issues outlined in section 2 of the report relating to the impact of the East Kettering SUE on the area defined in that section, the

suggested boundary be agreed subject to comments made as outlined above.

- (iii) all three options for the northern and eastern boundary of Barton Seagrave parish with Kettering unparished area be included within the consultation, including the change detailed above.

## **18.LGR.21 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – REPRESENTATION**

A report was submitted which considered the following key factors in respect of the creation of a Parish Council for the currently unparished area of Kettering Town:

- Council size
- Parish warding
- The years of elections
- The relationship with any future boundaries of the unitary authority area for the North Northamptonshire Council within the currently unparished area

It was noted there were currently 20 Borough Councillors for Kettering town and other towns of a similar size tended to have a number of councillors in the upper teens. There were three key tests to take into account: the number of councillors according to a formula; community identity and convenient and effective local government.

The following options were discussed:-

- 20 members with nine wards (largely the same as at present but dependent on the option for Barton Seagrave)
- 11 members with eight wards (based on areas, but with an increased number of electors)
- 13 members with five large wards (based mainly on the NCC electoral divisions and using the same names)
- 16 members with five large wards (based mainly on the NCC electoral divisions with 11 more members)
- 16 members with six new wards (a mixture of existing part or whole adjacent Borough Wards and adjacent polling districts).

During debate, members felt that, as a boundary commission review was due to take place between 2020 and 2024, to make major changes to boundaries through the Community Governance Review would confuse the electorate and for this reason any changes should remain as close as possible to the status quo.

Members were of the opinion that it was difficult to make a decision as it was not yet known which functions would be the responsibility of the new town council. However, it was noted that parish councils tended to deliver

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place-based services rather than people-based services, and therefore the elector/member ratio was less critical, especially as some members may also be councillors for the new unitary council.

It was also felt it would be important that people were encouraged to vote and maintaining the status quo would ensure continuity for the electorate, although it was acknowledged that legislation required the Council to take account of electoral forecasts and that this could affect the ratio of members to electors.

**RECOMMENDED** that Option 1, a 20 member Council with nine wards, based on the existing Borough Council warding arrangements, be presented as the Council's preferred option within the consultation.

*(The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.50 pm)*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair)

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