

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Governance Committee

Monday, 26 March 2018 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

T Lunnon (Chair)

R D Burrett (Vice-Chair)

D Crow, C R Eade, M G Jones, S J Joyce, P K Lamb, R A Lanzer, K McCarthy, T Rana and A C Skudder

Also in Attendance:

Councillor B J Burgess and R G Burgess

Officers Present:

Ann-Maria Brown	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Mez Matthews	Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Oakley	Electoral Services Manager
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 28 November 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Electoral Review - Ward Patterns

The Committee considered report LDS/135 of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in detail which provided the Council's draft submission of a pattern of wards to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The Chair advised those present that the Committee's consideration and voting in relation to the report would be divided into two parts, namely (1) consideration of the principles promoting a mixed pattern of Wards (10 Wards served by 3 Councillors and 3 Wards served by 2 Councillors); and (2) consideration of the mixed pattern of Wards as detailed in Appendix A to the report and any proposed amendments thereto.

Consideration of the Principle of Promoting a Mixed Pattern of Wards

Councillor Lamb, as Chair of the Electoral Review Panel, introduced the Panel's report and advised the Committee that the mixed pattern of Wards proposed in the

report was the best option for the Borough. It was noted that, a uniform pattern of Wards (ie. 12 Wards with 3 Councillors per Ward) would have resulted in the division of the communities of Tilgate and Broadfield to a level which would not meet the community interest requirement. The view was strongly expressed that the Council's wish to retain the Borough's electoral divisions in-line with the neighbourhood principle throughout Crawley had not been possible given the restrictions imposed by the LGBCE, and that the proposal contained within the report was the least-worst option for the Borough as a whole.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to endorse the Electoral Review Panel's findings that the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England should be for a mixed pattern of Wards (10 Wards served by 3 Councillors and 3 Wards served by 2 Councillors).

Consideration of the Mixed Pattern of Wards

The Committee then considered the second part of report LDS/135 which specifically dealt with the pattern of Wards and proposed ward boundaries within the submission. In addition to the Electoral Review Panel's proposal (which was included within Appendix A), the report contained a proposed alternative Scheme by Councillor Crow (Appendix B to the report) and proposed amendments to the Electoral Review Panel's Scheme by Councillor Lunnon (Appendix C to the report which had been provided as a supplementary agenda item). At the meeting, the proposed Scheme, alternative Scheme and amendments to the Electoral Review Panel's Scheme were moved and seconded at the beginning of the debate, but for the purposes of these minutes they have been detailed separately.

Scheme Proposed by the Electoral Review Panel

Councillor Lamb, as Chair of the Electoral Review Panel (seconded by Councillor Joyce) moved the Panel's Scheme which was included in Appendix A to report LDS/135. The Committee was advised that the Scheme was based on that produced by Officers to maintain the neighbourhood principle as best as possible.

Alternative Scheme Proposed by Councillor Crow

Councillor Crow (seconded by Councillor McCarthy) moved his proposed alternative Scheme which was detailed as Appendix B to report LDS/135. Councillor Crow indicated that the alternative Scheme proposed slight amendments to the Electoral Review Panel's Scheme which had been produced by Officers and aligned electoral Ward boundaries closest to the neighbourhood principle.

It was however suggested that Councillor Crow's alternative Scheme would result in some electoral Wards approaching the limits of electoral variance.

Following consideration of Councillor Crow's alternative scheme a vote was taken and the amendment was **LOST**.

Councillor Lunnon's Proposed Amendments to the Electoral Review Panel Scheme

Councillor Lunnon (seconded by Councillor Lamb) moved his proposed amendments to the Scheme which were detailed as Appendix C to report LDS/135 as contained within the supplementary agenda). The Committee was advised that the amendments related to specific areas of Bewbush, Broadfield and Gossops Green to

ensure areas with specific interests remained together. Councillor Lunnon stated that unfortunately, given the constraints, it was not possible to retain the whole of Broadfield within one electoral Ward, but that his proposed amendments would maintain the neighbourhood principle as far as possible.

The discussion by the Committee on the proposed amendment centred on what was the most appropriate approach for setting the boundary for Broadfield and Bewbush. Whether it was splitting both Broadfield and Bewbush across two wards, or whether a better option was splitting Broadfield between three wards and maintaining Bewbush within one ward. The majority of the Committee were of the opinion that the Scheme, incorporating the amendments proposed by Councillor Lunnon, was most suitable. Those members stated that the proposal maintained housing typography and ensured equality of representation, which was a significant criteria of the LGBCE.

Following consideration of Councillor Lunnon's proposed amendments to the Electoral Review Panel's scheme a vote was taken and the amendment was **CARRIED**.

Councillor Crow's Proposed Alternative Amendment to the Electoral Review Panel Scheme

Councillor Crow (seconded by Councillor Eade) verbally moved an amendment to the Electoral Review Panel's Scheme which proposed that Tinsley Lane be reinstated within the Three Bridges Ward, and that the Windmill Court, Longmere Road and St Georges Court area be relocated to the Langley Green and Manor Royal Ward as they adjoined the Tushmore Roundabout.

The Committee heard from Ian Miller, Chair of the Tinsley Lane Residents association, Councillor Bob Burgess and Councillor Brenda Burgess, (the Three Bridges Councillors) how they all believed Tinsley Lane should remain within Three Bridges rather than Langley Green and Manor Royal. They argued there was a strong community of interest and historical links between the two areas, and that such a community of interest did not exist with Langley Green to the same level. Also that the residents of Tinsley Lane used the facilities of Three Bridges rather than in Langley Green.

The Committee then held a lengthy debate over the proposed amendment relating to Tinsley Lane. Some Councillors were in support of the amendment and commented that the Tinsley Lane area strongly identified with Three Bridges and as they felt they had community of interest, they should remain in the ward. Also by moving the Windmill Court, Longmere Road and St Georges Court area into Langley Green it would represent the best way to retain electoral equality. Other views were expressed that the amendment did not provide the best outcome in terms of electoral equality across the town, that Tinsley Lane was a standalone community as they were spilt by a major road between them and Three Bridges which created a physical boundary between the two areas and geographically adjoining Langley Green and Manor Royal Ward there would have closer shared interests and they would be an improvement in the electoral equality.

Following lengthy consideration of Councillor Crow's proposed amendment to the Electoral Review Panel's scheme a vote was taken and the amendment was **LOST**.

Substantive Motion

Having been CARRIED, the Committee then voted on the motion as amended "to approve the mixed pattern of Wards submission as detailed in Appendix A to report LDS/135, subject to the submission being updated to reflect the amendments detailed

in revised Appendix C to report LDS/135 (which had been provided as a supplementary agenda item)".

At the request of Councillor Crow, and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 25.5, the names of the Councillors voting for and against the proposal above were recorded as set out below:

For the Proposal:

Councillors M Jones, S Joyce, P Lamb, T Lunnon, T Rana and A Skudder (6).

Against the Proposal:

Councillors R Burrett, D Crow, C Eade, R Lanzer and K McCarthy (5).

Abstentions:

None.

With the vote being 6 for the proposal and 5 against the proposal, the proposal was therefore CARRIED, and it was

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the mixed pattern of Wards submission as detailed in Appendix A to report LDS/135, subject to the submission being updated to reflect the amendments detailed in revised Appendix C to report LDS/135 (which had been provided as a supplementary agenda item).

NB Governance requested that the complete (updated) scheme be included as an appendix to these minutes for submission to Full Council.

4. Constitution Working Group Update

Councillor P Lamb, as Chair of the Constitution Working Group, provided a verbal update on the comprehensive review of the Constitution which had been established by the Committee at its meeting on 15 March 2017 (report LDS/126 refers). The Committee was advised that several re-drafted sections of the Constitution had been sent to him for comments and those sections would be circulated via email to the Working Group imminently.

RESOLVED

That the update provided by the Chair of the Constitution Working Group be noted.

5. Provisions Relating to Call-In and Urgency

The Committee was advised that there had been no cases, during the period since the last report, where an item had been protected from the Call-In Procedure on the grounds of urgency as provided for in Scrutiny Procedure Rule 14(k). The Committee noted that a recommendation to Full Council in relation to this matter would only be necessary if the Committee proposed to make a change to the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency.

The Committee noted that the Constitution currently required the provisions for Call-In and Urgency to be reviewed on an annual basis, however it was identified that an item

had last been protected from Call-In in 2007 and it was questioned whether the current monitoring procedures were fit for purpose. The Committee was therefore of the view that the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency only be reviewed in the event that a decision had been protected from Call-In during that municipal year and that the Constitution, due to be considered by the Full Council at its Annual General Meeting, be amended accordingly.

RESOLVED

1. That since the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency have not been used during the past twelve months, no change to the provisions are necessary at this stage.
2. That Full Council be recommended to amend Scrutiny Procedure Rule 14(l) to reflect that the provisions relating to Call-In and Urgency only be reviewed in the event that a decision had been protected from Call-In during that municipal year and that the Constitution, due to be considered by the Full Council at its Annual General Meeting, be amended accordingly.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Governance Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.25 pm

T Lunnon
Chair