

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE



Listening Learning Leading

Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee

HELD AT 6.30 PM ON MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017

MEETING ROOM 1, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK

Present:

Members: Ian White (Chairman), Steve Connel, Anthony Dearlove, Will Hall and Mocky Khan

Officers: Lesley Blue, Steven Corrigan, Matthew Gaskin and Margaret Reed

Number of members of the public: 1

34 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Charles Bailey. No substitute was appointed.

35 Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman signs them as such.

36 Declarations of interest

None.

37 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

38 Public participation

No members of the public had registered to speak.

39 Community Governance Reviews - suggested timetable and process

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services regarding recommendations for a revised timetable and process for community governance reviews.

The committee agreed that the proposed approach is more sensible than the existing process and would be a more effective use of officer time and resources.

RESOLVED:

1. To agree that the council undertakes a community governance review every four years with changes agreed for implementation at the next scheduled parish elections; and
2. To recommend that Council rescinds its resolution agreed on 17 July 2014 that a significant development proposal that sits adjacent to or straddles a parish boundary should automatically trigger a community governance review, such a review to take place on the inclusion of a site in a document that forms part of the approved Local Plan or when planning permission has been granted for the development of the site.

40 Community Governance Review - review of the size of Sonning Common Parish Council

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services on whether to undertake a review of parish councillor numbers following a request from Sonning Common Parish Council to increase the size of the parish from 12 to 14 councillors.

It was argued that due to the current workload and demands on the parish council and the impact of increased housing development, more councillors are necessary. There is interest and strength of feeling regarding this matter from members of the parish and this committee should be encouraging engagement in local democracy by extending parish councillor numbers and opening the issue to consultation. It was argued that the guidance issued by the National Association of Local Councils is outdated and should not be followed in this case.

The committee agreed, however, that Sonning Common currently has enough parish councillors based on its population size of 3,005 and 12 is more than reasonable with no imminent prospect of significant population growth. The committee therefore agreed not to undertake a review of parish councillor numbers for Sonning Common Parish Council.

RESOLVED: not to undertake a review of parish councillor numbers for Sonning Common Parish Council.

41 Community Governance Review - review of the parish boundary between Harpsden and Henley-on-Thames

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services regarding a request from Henley-on-Thames Town Council to review the boundary between Harpsden parish and Henley-on-Thames parish to transfer land south of Greys Road (Highlands Farm) currently in Harpsden parish to Henley parish.

The officer confirmed that, despite the agreement reached in Item 5 to recommend that Council rescinds its resolution agreed at its meeting on 17 July 2014, Council cannot rescind this until its meeting in December. Therefore, this resolution still stands and should be applied when considering this item.

The committee discussed this item and agreed to undertake a review of the parish boundary between Harpsden parish and Henley-on-Thames parish.

RESOLVED:

1. To agree to undertake a community governance review of the parish boundary between Harpsden parish and Henley-on-Thames parish south of Greys Road (Highlands Farm); and
2. To authorise the head of legal and democratic services to draft and publish the terms of reference for the review.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Chairman

Date