

## **COUNCIL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE**

**7 November 2017**

Present: Councillor D Walford (Chair)  
Councillor M Watkin (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors N Bell, A Dychton (for minute number 8.), J Johnson  
and R Smith

Officers: Electoral Services Manager  
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (JK)

### **5 Apologies for absence/ committee membership**

There were two changes of membership for this meeting: Councillor Bell replaced Councillor Mills and Councillor Smith replaced Councillor Shah.

No apologies were received from Councillor Steele.

### **6 Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### **7 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2017 were submitted and signed.

### **8 Report on Boundary Commission Proposals for new Parliamentary Boundaries**

The committee received a report of the Head of Democracy and Governance advising the committee of the final proposals of the review being undertaken by the Parliamentary Boundary Commission.

The report was introduced by the Electoral Services Manager. The council had no specific role in the consultation process, but as a principal council it could respond to the proposals. The latest proposals in front of the committee were different to previous iterations and included the loss of one Watford Borough

Council ward to the St Albans constituency. This was a breach of the previous proposals made by the Commission. The aim of the review was to reduce the overall number of constituencies from 650 to 600. Any response from the council, therefore, needed to take the form of a counter-proposal which ensured that all the constituencies affected were within the acceptable range of numbers of electors. The committee was asked to consider whether a response was appropriate and what that response should be.

The committee agreed that it was illogical and inappropriate for Woodside ward to become part of the St Albans constituency. There was not a good reason to sub-divide the borough when wards from outside were included in the constituency. The residents considered themselves to live in Watford and being represented by an MP for St Albans would be detrimental to them.

It was further agreed that South Oxhey had a strong link with Watford; however this link was less apparent for Carpenders Park.

Considering the proposals in relation to the Meriden estate, the committee wished to object to a small area of the estate being excluded from the constituency. The estate was built after the boundaries were originally drawn up.

It was noted that individual parties could submit their own responses to the consultation.

Members discussed the different options available to them, noting the deadline for submissions of 11 December and that there was no meeting of full Council before that date. It was underlined that any response needed to include counter-proposals and other areas needed to be taken into account. Following a question about the remit of the committee, members were advised that it would not be prudent to rely on others submitting representations to make appropriate recommendations in relation to neighbouring constituencies. It was therefore acceptable for the council to make proposals addressing the wider region. The committee considered requesting several proposals on a numbers basis and delegating the final decision. Some members were not content with this option.

A proposal was made that Woodside ward be retained in the Watford constituency together with the addition of South Oxhey ward; Carpenders Park ward to be part of the Hertsmere constituency and London Colney ward to be returned to the St Albans constituency. This proposal ensured that all three constituencies were within the acceptable total electorate limits. It was also noted that London Colney ward was located within St Albans District. It was agreed that this, together with the Hertsmere section of Meriden estate being included in the Watford constituency, was an appropriate counter proposal.

Members were of the view that a response to the consultation was required and agreed that the counter proposal was acceptable.

RESOLVED –

That the council respond to the consultation with the following counter proposal:

- The Watford parliamentary constituency to include all 12 borough wards, including Woodside.
- The whole of the Meriden estate, including the properties situated within the Hertsmere Borough Council area, be located within the Watford constituency.
- The Watford parliamentary constituency to include South Oxhey ward.
- The Carpenders Park ward be moved to the Hertsmere constituency.
- The London Colney ward be retained in the St Albans constituency.

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm  
and finished at 7.30 pm