

## HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

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| Meeting name & Date              | <b>Full Council</b><br><b>Wednesday 21st September 2022</b>   |
| Agenda item                      | <b>11</b>   |
| Report title                     | <b>Community Governance Review (CGR) -<br/>Consultation Responses and Adoption of Final<br/>Proposals</b>   |
| Report reference no.             |   |
| Wards affected                   | Aldenham West and Shenley   |
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| List of Appendices               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Analysis of initial consultation responses</li><li>2. Analysis of final consultation responses</li><li>3. Map of Common Boundary between Watford and Hertsmere at Three Valleys Way Bushey</li><li>4. Map of proposed principle boundary change</li><li>5. Map of Haydon Road proposed principle boundary change</li><li>6. Map of Cockram Road proposed principle boundary change</li></ol> |
| Reason for urgency               |   |

**PUBLIC REPORT - this report is available to the public.**

### 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. In relation to the **Community Governance Review** of the Parishes of Aldenham, Ridge, Shenley and South Mimms, the Council determines:

- 1.1.1. To adopt the recommendations of the Constitution and Member Development Panel set out in Paragraph 6 of the officers report.
- 1.1.2 To instruct the Managing Director to cause the decision of the Council and reasons for them to be published and brought to the attention of person interested in the review, as soon as is reasonably practicable;
- 1.1.3 To authorise the Head of Legal & Democratic Services in consultation with the Managing Director:-
  - 1.1.3.1 to draft and make a Community Governance Reorganisation Order incorporating such ancillary and consequential provisions as are considered necessary or desirable to give effect to the decisions of the Council;
  - 1.1.3.2 to cause a copy of the Community Governance Reorganisation Order and a Map meeting the requirements of Section 96(4)(b) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to be placed on deposit at the Civic Offices;
  - 1.1.3.3 to cause a notice to be published informing members of the public that the Community Governance Reorganisation Order and Map can be inspected at the Civic Offices during normal office opening hours; and
  - 1.1.3.4 to inform the persons referred to in Section 96(7) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 that a Community Governance Re-organisation Order has been made and to send two copies of such Order to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- 1.2. That Council agrees the recommendation of the Constitution and Member Development Panel to co-operates with Watford Borough Council to request that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England undertakes a Principle Area Boundary Review of Watford Borough Council and Hertsmere Borough Council focussed on common boundary realignments in Hertsmere polling districts EA, AB and BB.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

- 2.1 To present to the Council for adoption the recommendations of the Constitution and Member Development Panel in relation to the Community Governance Review of the parishes of Aldenham, Ridge, Shenley and South

Mimms and to request Council to authorise the making of a Community Governance Reorganisation Order to give effect to those recommendations.

- 2.3 To seek the approval of the Council to co-operate with Watford Borough Council, in requesting the Local Government Boundaries Commission for England (LGBCE) to conduct a Principle Area Boundary Review of the boundary between the Boroughs of Hertsmere and Watford with a view to:-
  - 2.3.1 incorporating polling district EA (the part of the Birds Estate in Watford currently forming part of the parish of Aldenham) in the Borough of Watford; and
  - 2.3.2 altering the Borough boundary adjoining Nos 1 to 31 (odd) Haydon Road, Bushey and Nos 1 to 6 (inclusive) Cockram Road Bushey to secure that in future, properties that currently fall mainly within the Borough of Hertsmere and partly within the Borough of Watford, fall wholly within the Borough of Hertsmere.

### **3. BACKGROUND TO COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

- 3.1 On 17 November 2021 Council received a report seeking authority from the officers to commence a Community Governance Review (CGR) in relation to the parish areas of Aldenham, Ridge, Shenley and South Mimms. Council approved the Terms of Reference for the CGR along with an indicative timetable. The Constitution and Member Development Panel (CMDP) was charged with formulating the detailed consultation proposals, considering the consultation responses and making final recommendations to the full Council (Council minute 280/2021 refers).
- 3.2 The drivers for the CGR were identified in the report to Council as follows:-
  - 3.2.1 to consider the case for aligning the boundaries of the Parish Ward of Aldenham West with the boundaries of the Borough Ward of Aldenham West. This was because in 2018 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had made alterations to the Borough's ward boundaries, one of the consequences of which was that the boundaries of the Aldenham West Parish ward ceased to correspond with the new boundaries of the Aldenham West Borough ward. As a result, Aldenham Parish Council had requested a Community Governance Review to consider the case for re-aligning the Parish and Borough Ward boundaries. The practical consequences of this would be the extension of the Aldenham West Parish Ward to incorporate the adjacent unparished area of Patchett's Green - essentially polling districts EE and EF totalling 31 dwellings and 389 registered electors;
  - 3.2.2 to consider separating from the Parish of Aldenham the area falling within Polling District EA, known as the Birds Estate, totalling 164 dwellings and 255 registered electors. This area was physically separated from for the rest of the parish of Aldenham by the M1 motorway with all access roads to and from the Estate leading to Watford Town. It was considered unfair that the residents of the Birds Estate had to pay a precept to Aldenham Parish Council for services

they were unlikely to use. The optimal solution would be the incorporation of Polling District into the Borough of Watford but as that would require a Borough Boundaries Review that included Watford Borough, the short term expedient would be to remove the area of polling district AE from the parish of Aldenham, thus relieving these 'de facto' residents of Watford of the burden of paying a precept to Aldenham Parish Council; and

- 3.2.3 to determine the community governance arrangements required to replace the non-functioning Parish Council of Ridge taking into account the potential impacts on the adjoining parishes of Shenley and South Mimms. The options would be to attempt to re-invigorate Ridge Parish Council, abolish Ridge Parish Council (considered but rejected by the Council in 2012 under the power to abolish Parish Councils with less than 150 electors) (Ridge currently has 143 electors) or merge the parish of Ridge with one or both of the neighbouring parishes of Shenley and South Mimms to create a new Parish with a new Parish Council.

#### **4. CONSULTATION PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 CMDP met on 11 February 2022 to agree an amended timetable for the CGR as well as the initial consultation proposals and methodology in order to secure engagement with the electors in the parished and unparished areas affected by the review as well as other key stakeholders including Aldenham, Shenley and South Mimms Parish Councils and the relevant Borough ward Councillors.
- 4.2 Full details of the amended timetable and consultation proposals can be found on the Community Governance Review pages of the Council's website by clicking on the following link:

[Community Governance Review 2022 - Hertsmere Borough Council](#)

#### **5. CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

##### **Initial Consultation**

- 5.1 Council is referred to Appendix 1 which summarises the responses to the initial consultation. The responses were considered by CMDP on 19 May 2022 and taken onto account in formulating the terms of the final consultation.

##### **Final Consultation**

- 5.2 Appendix 2 provides a detailed analysis of the final consultation responses and paragraphs 5.3 to 5.10 below is a summary of them.

##### Parish of Aldenham

- 5.3 In summary:

- Of the 163 properties in the polling district EA only three responded to the final consultation.
- two of the three favoured the removal of polling district EA (known as The Birds Estate in Meriden) from the parish ward of Aldenham West (and forming its own Parish but without a Parish Council )
- The third favoured EA remaining as part of APC, however acknowledged that should EA be removed, felt that naming the parish the same as the Watford ward 'Meriden' ward would cause confusion for residents.
- There were no responses from households in polling district areas of EE or EF for or against the inclusion of these unparished polling districts in the parish ward of Aldenham West.
- There were 20 responses received from residents within the whole Aldenham Parish area. Most supported the proposals presented.

### Notes

- a. *Polling District EA currently has 257 registered electors*
- b. *This area to become its own parish area but not have a council.*
- c. *As a result of being removed from APC, council tax precept would be removed with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.*
- d. *Electors would continue to vote within the Aldenham West ward for Borough and County elections but would no longer be eligible for the Parish elections.*
- e. *Electors would continue to vote at the Meriden Centre, Garston.*
- f. *Polling District EE, known as Patchetts Green has a total electorate of 377.*
- g. *Polling District EF, known as Dagger Lane has a total electorate of 10.*
- h. *These wards now vote in the Aldenham West Ward as a result of the Hertsmere boundary review. As part of APC they will vote for the parish in the all-out elections in 2023.*
- i. *Residents would have to pay a precept with effect of 01 April 2023. The current (2022) precept is £125 per household.*
- j. *Residents in this area currently pay special expenses of £17. This amount would reduce to 0.16p as APC execute most functions that would otherwise be provided by the Council.*
- k. *This area would benefit from any CIL money awarded in the area which can be spent at the Parish discretion.*
- l. *The current total electorate of the Parish as of 4 May 2022 is 7464. The estimated electorate based on the changes would be 7594. There was no proposal to any amendments to the number of councillors and the parish would retain:*

*Aldenham West 6 councillors; electorate ratio of 1: 627*

*Aldenham East 6 Councillors; electorate ratio of 1: 639*

### Parish of Ridge

- 5.4 There were five recommendations put to the residents as part of the final consultation:

R1. That the parishes of Ridge and South Mimms be merged to form a single civil parish titled "The Parish of South Mimms with Ridge".

R2. That a new parish Council be established titled "South Mimms with Ridge Parish Council".

R3. That two parish wards be created, following the current South Mimms and Ridge boundaries.

R4. That the number of councillors for the proposed Parish council be five.

R5. That the number of councillors returned for South Mimms ward be four and the number of councillors for Ridge ward be one.

5.5 In summary of the 100 households in Ridge only 15 responses were received, eight of those in support of R1, whilst seven were against. Eight of the responses received were in favour of warding the parish areas, whilst no households were against.

Of the 402 households in South Mimms there were 30 responses. 29 households were in support of R1, whilst two were against (this includes one anonymous submission).

5.6 The suggested names of “South Mimms with Ridge Parish Council” and “The Parish of South Mimms with Ridge” gained little support from the households of both Ridge and South Mimms suggesting that the word “AND” should be used rather than “With”.

5.7 There was clear support from both areas towards warding the Parish. Residents felt this would help retain historical identities.

### Notes

- a. *South Mimms and Ridge Parish Councils merge, creating a new Parish Council.*
- b. *Ward the Parish so that Ridge and South Mimms retain their identities within the new Parish.*
- c. *The combined electorate is: 781, whilst there is no formal calculation for the number of members needed for a Parish, we consider that a total of 5 councillors be elected as follows:  
South Mimms 4 councillors, electorate ratio 1:158  
Ridge 1 councillor, electorate ratio 1:150*
- d. *We estimate that for Ridge to maintain their own Parish they would have to pay between £100/200 in precept (based on the South Mimms calculation) plus £17 special expenses. The current precept for South Mimms is £60 plus £17 special expenses.*
- e. *Electors would continue to vote as per their current arrangements; however Ridge Ward would only have to elect one candidate which based on the level of interest in the area should be sustainable for future elections.*

### South Mimms Parish

5.8 The merger of South Mimms Parish Council with Ridge is supported by South Mimms Parish Council and gained the most support from South Mimms responders.

### Shenley Parish

5.9 There were three recommendations proposed for Shenley Parish Council

R1. To split Shenley Parish Council into two wards

R2. To name those wards Shenley North and Shenley South

R3. To proportion nine councillors; six for Shenley North and three for Shenley South

- 5.10 Of the 1760 households in Shenley Parish 83 responses were received. 67 of the 83 responses disagreed with R1 to split the Parish into wards.

#### Notes

- a. *The current electorate for polling district MA (Shenley North) is 2090*
- b. *Current electorate for polling district MB (Shenley South) is 1080*

## **6. PROPOSALS**

- 6.1 CMDP considered and had regard to the final consultation responses at its meeting on 5 September 2022 and the Panel agreed to make the following recommendations to full Council for adoption:-

#### Parish of Aldenham

1. That the area comprised in Polling District EA be removed from the civil Parish of Aldenham.
2. That a civil Parish be established to the area comprised in Polling District EA titled 'the Hertsmere Parish of Meriden' but that a Parish Council not be created for this Parish.
3. That the areas comprised in Polling Districts EE and EF be incorporated in the civil Parish of Aldenham to form part of the parish ward of Aldenham West.
4. That subject to adoption of Proposal 3 the electoral arrangements for Aldenham Parish Council remain unchanged with the Parish Council retaining twelve Councillors with Aldenham West and Aldenham East Wards returning six councillors each.

#### The Parishes of Ridge and South Mimms

5. That the South Mimms Parish Council and Ridge Parish Council be dissolved;
6. That the Parish areas of Ridge and South Mimms be merged to form a single civil Parish titled 'the Parish of South Mimms and Ridge'.
7. That a Parish Council be established for the Parish of South Mimms and Ridge titled 'South Mimms and Ridge Parish Council'.
8. That the number of councillors of South Mimms and Ridge Parish Council be five.

9. That two Parish Wards be created for South Mimms and Ridge Parish Council:
  - The first corresponding to the area of the former South Mimms Parish Council to be known as 'South Mimms Ward'; and
  - The second corresponding to the area of the former Ridge Parish Council to be known as 'Ridge Ward';
10. That the number of councillors returned for South Mimms Ward shall be four and the number of councillors returned for Ridge Ward shall be one;
11. That the land, property, rights and liabilities of the former South Mimms Parish Council and Ridge Parish Council be transferred to the South Mimms and Ridge Parish Council.

#### Parish of Shenley

- 6.2 That there be no changes to the boundaries of the Civil Parish of Shenley or to the electoral arrangements for Shenley Parish Council.

#### Community Governance Orders

- 6.3 That a Community Governance Reorganisation Order be made to give effect to Proposals 1 to 11 above and to enable the Borough Council to anticipate a precept for South Mimms and Ridge Parish Council for financial year 2022/23 and for inaugural elections to be held to the new Parish Council on 4 May 2023.

## **7 REQUEST FOR PRINCIPAL AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW**

- 7.1 If agreed by Council, the proposal to remove polling district EA from the parish of Aldenham will relieve taxpayers in the parts of the Birds Estate falling within the Borough of Hertsmere from paying a precept to Aldenham Parish Council for services and facilities they make little use of. Indeed, as it is acknowledged that the Birds Estate is both physically and functionally part of Watford, it is also recommended that the Council joins with Watford Borough Council to request the LGBCE to conduct a Principal Area Boundary Review with the objective of including all of the Birds estate within the Borough of Watford. Council are referred to Appendices 3 and 4.
- 7.2 As a Principal Area Boundary Review happens infrequently, it is also recommended that the opportunity is taken to request the LGBCE address another anomaly relating to the Borough boundary between Watford and Hertsmere adjoining No's 1 to 31 (odd) Haydon Road, Bushey. Appendix 5 highlights how in this case, cross boundary development has resulted in a small number of residential properties located in Hertsmere polling district BB (Falconer - Bushey St James Ward) also having a part or all of their front gardens/private parking spaces located in Watford.
- 7.3 As Nos 1 to 31 (odd) Haydon Road pay Council tax to Hertsmere because the majority of their property is in Hertsmere, electors at these properties