

## **Item 6 (a) – Community Governance Review**

The attached report was considered by the Governance Committee, relevant minute extract below:

### Governance Committee – 18 September 2014 (Minute 11 )

Members considered the report which advised that the District Council's draft recommendations for changes to the warding of Shoreham Parish and a change to the boundary between the parishes of Chevening and Sevenoaks Weald had been published on 30 July 2014, and the consultation period had closed on 29 August 2014. The Electoral Services Manager reported that no representations had been received, and that there had been no opposition to the proposals submitted by Shoreham Parish – to create a new ward of Romney Street.

The report also outlined the proposal to amend the boundary between Chevening and Sevenoaks Weald Parishes in the vicinity of Bowzell Green, and advised that the consequential change to the Brasted, Chevening & Sundridge and Seal & Weald Wards of the District Council would be dealt with by The Boundary Commission and along with everything else, come into effect at the joint District Council and Parish Councils elections on 7 May 2015. The next stage of the review was for the District Council to publish its final recommendations by the end of November 2014.

One of the recommendations of the report was that the number of parish councillors for the Romney Street Ward, the Shoreham Ward and The Well Hill Hundreds Ward of the Parish of Shoreham be 1, 6 and 1 respectively. Some Members had been lobbied outside of the consultation period that it would be more appropriate to be 1, 5, 2 respectively, which would more fairly represent constituents. The current recommendation was that one Councillor would represent 159 in the Romney Street Ward; 6 would represent the 713 people of Shoreham (119 constituents per representative); and 211 constituents of Well Hill Hundreds Ward would have one Councillor. The alternative suggestion would be 1 representative for 159 constituents; 5 representing 143 each; and 2 representing 106 each.

The Chairman pointed out that this information had missed the consultation period in which no objections had been raised, and pointed out that if Members were minded to change the recommendation it would need to go back out to consultation and would therefore not be in place ready for the publication of the register on 28 November 2014 ready for the election on 7 May 2015.

Members queried how the publication of the register affected the decision, and how long any further consultation would take.

*Action 1: The Electoral Services Manager to find out how long any further consultation would take if Members were minded to go with the suggestion of 1, 5, 2.*

## Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that

- a) following consultation on the District Council's draft recommendation, a Romney Street Ward be created in the Parish of Shoreham;
- b) following consultation on the District Council's draft recommendation, the number of parish councillors for the Romney Street Ward, the Shoreham Ward and The Well Hill Hundreds Ward of the Parish of Shoreham be 1, 6 and 1 respectively; and
- c) following consultation on the District Council's draft recommendation, the boundary between the parishes of Chevening and Sevenoaks Weald be amended in the vicinity of Bowzell Green.

## Footnote

Electoral Services Manager response to Action 1:

'With regard to how long any further consultation would take, there is no statutory time frame. However, a reasonable minimum period would be twelve weeks.

The combined consultation period throughout this Community Governance Review was twelve weeks.'