

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 11th NOVEMBER 2016**

PRESENT –

Councillors

*D. Clegg
A. Greaves
M. Iqbal
D. Whalley*

Also in attendance

*Philip Mousdale Corporate Director
Sarah Waterworth Committee Administrator*



1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor A. Greaves appointed chairman for the 2016/17 municipal year

Councillor Greaves (Chairman – in the Chair)

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

3. COUNCIL SIZE AND FREQUENCY OF ELECTIONS

The Corporate Director submitted a report which gave an update on the progress, the work involved and the decisions required to reduce the number of councillors and alter the frequency of elections.

With regards the number of councillors and warding arrangements, a formal electoral review by the Local Government Boundary Commission was required. The Commission would produce recommendations which would then be implemented by a Statutory Order. The starting point for an electoral review was the number of councillors the Council should have. Previous reports and discussions had envisaged a reduction of around 15 Councillors.

The Commission would need to have an informal discussion at the outset with the Council's political and managerial leadership looking at three areas:-

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- The governance arrangements of the Council
- The scrutiny function relating to the Council's own decision making and its responsibility to outside bodies
- The representational role of the councillors in the local community and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the Council on local partner organisations.

The Boundary Commission was required by law to have regard to the three criteria – the need to secure as near as possible the same elector: councillor ration across the borough; the need to reflect the identities and interest of local communities; and the need to secure effective and convenient local government.

The Commission would expect a detailed written submission to be drawn up which would set out the vision for the Council over the next five to ten years. The Commission would then announce the Council size it considered appropriate for the preparation of warding proposals. It would also need to consider whether any changes to town and parish councils' should be made as a consequence of any changes to Pendle's wards.

It was estimated that a review of this nature was likely to take 12 months depending on the Commission's review programme.

With regards the frequency of elections, the Council could decide to move from elections by thirds to whole elections and could resolve to have the first whole election in 2018 or 2019. It could not hold them in 2017 as this was a county council election year. However if the Council also agreed to reduce the number of councillors the timing would be influenced by when the Boundary Commission electoral review was completed.

RECOMMENDED

- (1) That the Council agrees to the carrying out of an electoral review.
- (2) That the proposed reduction in the number of Councillors be from 49 to 45 preferably in 15 wards of 3 members each and the corporate Director e requested o work up a submission on that basis.
- (3) That elections remain by thirds.
- (4) That a Community Governance Review be undertaken to look at parishing of the Borough including the number and areas of town and parish councils, and their electoral arrangements including warding and numbers of councillors.

4. PROPOSED PARLIMENTARY BOUNDARIES

The Corporate Director submitted a report which asked members to consider a submission to be made to the Boundary Commission for England regards a proposal for a new Pendle constituency.

It was reported that the Boundary Commission was legally bound to produce recommendations for constituencies with electorates of between 71,031 and 78,507. Pendle's Constituency as at November 2016 had an electorate of 62,891.

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The starting point needed to be the wards which touched the present Pendle constituency

Ribble Valley

Gisburn, Rimington (1,083)

Chatburn (1,063)

Wiswell and Pendleton (1,244)

Sabden (1,192)

Read and Simonstone (2,080)

Burnley

Briercliffe (4,337)

Lanehead (4,416)

Queensgate (3,887)

Daneshouse (3,685)

Whittlefield and Ightenhill (4,675)

Gawthorpe (4,417)

A discussion took place regarding a number of different options and it was reported that the deadline for submission was 5th December 2016.

RESOLVED

That the following options be submitted to the Boundary Commission for England:

- (a) the current 20 Pendle wards plus Briercliffe, Lanehead and Queensgate (75,531 electorate)
- (b) the current 20 Pendle wards plus Lanehead, Queensgate and Daneshouse (74,879 electorate)
- (b) the current 20 Pendle wards plus Gisburn, Rimington, Chatburn, Wiswell and Pendleton, St. Mary's, Salthill, Littlemoor, Primrose and Edisford and Low Moor (electorate 78,093)

Chairman: _____