

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL REVIEW WORKING GROUP HELD ON

25 January 2022

7.30 - 8.38 pm

PRESENT

Committee Members

Councillor Simon Carter (Chair)
Councillor Tony Edwards
Councillor James Leppard
Councillor Sue Livings
Councillor Chris Vince

Officers

Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Support
Alison Hodgson, Electoral Services Manager
Janet Jackson, Corporate and Governance Support Team Leader
Adam Rees, Senior Governance Support Officer
Natasha Terrell, Assistant Director - Governance, HR and Legal

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Agreed.

10. MATTERS ARISING

Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services said that the LGBCE had been advised of the Council's decision to not change its electoral cycles at this time.

11. SIZE OF HARLOW COUNCIL

The Working Group considered a report on the proposed Council submission to the LGBCE on the Council's size. The Working Group also considered the initial response from the LGBCE.

It was agreed that the Council should submit a proposed increase of three Councillors to the LGBCE and that the submission should be strengthened in this regard.

The Working Group asked that the following was added to the submission:

- i) That whilst Councillors are currently able to cope with their workload, there is extra work which could be carried out if extra capacity was created through additional Councillors;
- ii) Additional emphasis on population trends over the next five years and the workload these will create;
- iii) The growth of social networks has led to additional work from new areas which didn't exist at the time of previous review;
- iv) Harlow has a high percentage of council homes which creates a greater and ongoing workload when compared with other authorities;
- v) The workload created by HTS;
- vi) The current and expected future workload created by HGGT;
- vii) Greater detail about the time commitment created by Development Management including briefings and upcoming major applications;
- viii) Information about the time commitment for the Audit and Standards Committee; and
- ix) Information about how the nature of casework has changed and an analysis of the complexity of casework.

It was agreed that an update version of the submission would be submitted to the Working Group for comment prior to its inclusion on the Full Council agenda in February.

Simon Hill explained that the Working Group would begin looking at the revised ward boundaries towards the end of February.

RESOLVED that the Working Group:

- A** Recommended to Full Council that the Council Size Submission (attached as Appendix A to the report) be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, in particular noting the request that the number of Councillors be increased. subject to the amendments above and any comments following circulation of the revised draft.
- B** Noted the responses to the Councillor Survey (attached as Appendix B to the report).

12. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.