

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 July 2013, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 3.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Illingworth (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Mrs Goode, MacKay, Mrs Sawdon, Mrs Mellor, Shilton, Weed and Wreford-Bush.

16. **SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor Mrs Sawdon substituted for Councillor Pratt and Councillor Mrs Mellor substituted for Councillor Mrs Higgins.

17. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute Number 18 – Item 4 – Warwick District Community Governance Review 2013 – Terms of Reference

Councillors Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Mrs Goode, Illingworth MacKay, Mrs Sawdon, Mrs Mellor, Shilton, Weed and Wreford-Bush declared interests because the Community Governance Review affected all areas of the District.

Councillors Gill, Illingworth and Shilton declared additional interests because they were either Parish or Town Councillors.

Councillor Mrs Mellor declared an additional interest as a Warwick Town Councillor and a resident of Warwick Gates.

18. **WARWICK DISTRICT COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW 2013 – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which outlined the terms of reference for the District wide Community Governance Review due to be undertaken in 2013.

The District Council recently completed a review of its own electoral warding arrangements and decided to conduct a community governance review to ensure that electors were able to identify clearly with the parish in which they were resident, ensuring as far as practicable, that electoral area boundaries at all levels of local government were coterminous.

The first stage in undertaking the review was to agree the terms of reference and these were attached as an appendix to the report for consideration. The terms of reference covered both those matters required by legislation but also issues such as the principle of coterminosity of parish and District ward boundaries. The formal review process was proposed to start on 16 July 2013, the terms of reference would be published and had been drafted in line with the relevant legislation. These were attached as an appendix to the report.

At a recent Regulatory meeting in April 2013, the Committee had not felt that the outcome regarding the Warwick Gates area was satisfactory and requested that the Boundary Commission be asked to consider a partial review in four to five years' time to help resolve this outstanding matter. The verbal response

from the Commission to the Chief Executive of this Council was to suggest that such a review might be justified if it arose out of the planned community governance review. It was therefore suggested that within this District wide community governance review, a specific household survey of residents in the Warwick Gates area be undertaken to try to establish if there was any desire for change and if so, what sort of change.

The second recommendation in the report proposed consulting with the residents of Warwick Gates to establish their views on their current electoral area being divided between three parishes; each with their own precept and approach and whether residents wanted those arrangements to be reviewed.

The report advised that there were no alternative options because the Council had already agreed to undertake the community governance review following completion of the Boundary Commission review for District electoral arrangements, in order to bring in line parish and town boundaries with new District ward boundaries.

However, the Committee could decide within certain parameters to change the terms of reference or decide not to proceed with the household survey of residents of the Warwick Gates area. Previous decisions and concerns expressed had been reflected in the recommendations put forward and alternatives could run counter to those earlier decisions.

Members were mindful that recommendation 2.1 made no reference to accessing appropriate legal advice and requested that this wording be included.

The Chief Executive assured Members that approval was only being sought to consult the residents on their views and was not to put any measures in place at this time.

Members raised queries regarding the links between the community governance review and the Local Plan and felt strongly that opinions from residents and Parish and Town Councils needed to be taken into account.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the terms of reference for the community governance review set out in Appendix 1, be approved as the basis for consultation on the local governance electoral arrangements and that appropriate legal advice is sought to ensure that the process remains within the boundaries of the law; and.
- (2) the residents of the Warwick Gates housing estate are consulted, to seek their views on the current electoral arrangements for their electoral area being currently divided between 3 Parishes; each with their own precept and approach.

(The meeting ended at 16.10)