

**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on
12 July 2021**

PRESENT -

Councillor Colin Keane (Chair); Councillor Hannah Dalton (Vice-Chair); Councillors Kate Chinn, Robert Foote, Eber Kington, Jan Mason (as nominated substitute for Councillor Bernice Froud), Steven McCormick (as nominated substitute for Councillor Clive Woodbridge), Julie Morris (as nominated substitute for Councillor David Gulland) and Clive Smitheram

In Attendance: Councillor Alex Coley

Absent: Councillor Bernice Froud, Councillor David Gulland, Councillor Lucie McIntyre and Councillor Clive Woodbridge

Officers present: Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer) and Sarah Keeble (Democratic Services Officer)

1 QUESTION TIME

No questions were submitted or asked by members of the public.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in relation to items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the previous meetings of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 29 April and 13 May were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

4 SUBMISSION PROPOSALS FOR BOROUGH WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee received a report requesting it to agree a draft submission for Council's approval, in response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England consultation, on Warding Arrangements in the Borough.

The Committee received a verbal introduction from the Chief Legal Officer. The Committee was also addressed by the Chairman of the Electoral Review Task and Finish Group, who gave its thanks to the Chief Legal Officer and the Member Task & Finish Group for all of their work throughout the last year.

The following matters were raised by the Committee:

- a) **Boundaries:** Members spoke about the options for the new Ward boundaries, and raised their concerns about the possible changes. The Chair of the Electoral Review Task and Finish Group noted that individuals and organisations will be able to contact the Boundary Commission once the Council's Warding Arrangements Submission has been put forward, should they wish for further consultation. The Boundary Commission will then make a decision having considered these submissions.
- b) **Possibility of merging two Wards:** Members spoke about the possible 13 Ward option which would be facilitated by merging Stoneleigh and Auriol Wards, and the implications that this may cause. Members highlighted the differences between these two Wards and expressed views on keeping them separate. Members also spoke about whether it may be possible to merge West Ewell and Ruxley Wards. A representative from the Electoral Review Task and Finish Group explained that this had been explored as a possibility, but deemed infeasible. This was based on looking at the 2019 candidate figures for both Wards which collated to 24, an exceedingly high figure. This merging of Wards would also cause the need for 5 Ward Members.

An additional recommendation was proposed by Councillor Eber Kington, and seconded by Councillor Robert Foote. This was to read:

Requests that Officers prepare a Report for the Standards Committee setting out actions and opportunities to assist councillors with the management of their workloads. Areas to be assessed should include, but not be limited to, access to and the storage and management of data, changes to the committee structure, technologies available for purchase, examples from other authorities and training opportunities in managing workloads.

Following consideration, it was resolved with 8 Members voting for and 1 Member voting against that the Committee:

- (1) **Confirmed that they wish the Council to respond to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's ('the Commission') consultation on Warding Arrangements in the Borough;**

Following consideration, it was resolved with 7 Members voting for, 1 Member voting against and 1 abstention that the Committee:

- (2) **Selected the 14 Ward option as set out in the report to take forward as the Council's Warding Arrangements Submission;**

Following consideration, it was resolved with 8 Members voting for and 1 abstention that the Committee:

- (3) **Agreed to delegate to the Chief Legal Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy and Resources and the Chair of the Electoral**

Review Task & Finish Group, any changes to the draft Warding Arrangements submission as may be necessary;

- (4) Agreed to refer to Council, the draft submission on Warding Arrangements for approval and final submission to the Commission;**

Following consideration, it was resolved unanimously that the Committee:

- (5) Requested that Officers prepare a Report for the Standards Committee setting out actions and opportunities to assist councillors with the management of their workloads. Areas to be assessed should include, but not be limited to, access to and the storage and management of data, changes to the committee structure, technologies available for purchase, examples from other authorities and training opportunities in managing workloads.**

The meeting began at 7.31 pm and ended at 8.27 pm

COUNCILLOR COLIN KEANE (CHAIR)