

COUNCIL

22nd February 2022

Present: **The Mayor, Councillor Stephen Hodgson, in the Chair**

Councillors Agar, Allcott, Altaf, A. Amos, B. Amos, Barnes, Bayliss, Bisset, Carver, Cleary, Collins, Cronin, Denham, Ditta, Geraghty, Gregson, Griffiths, Hassan, Mrs L. Hodgson, Johnson, Lamb, Laurenson, Lawrance, Lewing, Mackay, Mitchell, Norfolk, Riaz, Roberts, Stafford, Stanley, Stephen and Udall

65 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Hodges.

66 Declarations of Interest

None.

67 Public Participation

Frances Lankester spoke to the Council in respect of item 68 (Council Electoral Cycle). In summary, he stated that he opposed changing from election by thirds on the grounds that having an all-out election every four years would be a dramatic change which would negate the stability argument. Yearly elections meanwhile provide more opportunities for accountability.

68 Council Electoral Cycle

The Council considered a report on whether or not the Council wishes to change the electoral cycle. The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance presented the report and advised the Council that, under the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, councils that elect by thirds can move to whole-council elections by passing a resolution at a special meeting of the Full Council. The resolution will only be deemed carried if a two-thirds majority of those voting decide to vote in favour of a proposed change to the electoral cycle. If the Council so resolves, it would be unable to change the scheme again for at least five years.

The report included information on the public consultation on whether to change, which ran for 3 weeks and closed on 13 February. Overall a majority of respondents supported a move to whole council elections although a sizeable minority preferred to remain with the current arrangements.

The Council were recommended to consider and determine whether to:

- a) continue with the current elections regime of elections by thirds; or
- b) change to whole council elections every 4 years as from 2024.

The Council proceeded to debate the matter and all Group Leaders were given the opportunity to comment and express a view.

It was proposed by Councillor Bayliss and seconded by Councillor Gregson that the Council should change to whole Council elections every 4 years.

Upon being put to the vote, the voting on the proposal was as follows:

For:	31
Against:	2
Abstain:	1

It was therefore agreed and

RESOLVED: That the Council agree to:

- 1. note the outcome of the public consultation detailed in this report and at Appendix 1;**
- 2. change to whole council elections every 4 years as from 2024; and**
- 3. authorise the Corporate Director - Planning and Governance to issue the necessary public information as required by legislation and undertake any further actions necessary to give effect to the Council's resolution.**

69 The Local Government Boundary Commission For England: Electoral Review - Council Size Submission

The Council considered a referral report from the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee.

At its meeting on 8th February 2022, the Committee had considered a report on the draft Council Size Submission, setting out the Council's opinion of how many councillors it should have. Once agreed by the Council, this would be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as part of the Commission's forthcoming review. The full Committee report and the draft Council Size Submission were attached to the report.

The Committee had expressed support for the draft Submission and no amendments were proposed. Members of the Committee expressed the view that the current number of councillors (35) works well for the Council and should be considered the preferred number.

It was proposed by Councillor Bayliss and seconded by Councillor Gregson and on being put to the vote it was agreed and

RESOLVED: That the Council agree the Council Size Submission set out in Appendix 1 and authorise the Corporate Director - Planning and Governance to submit this document to the Boundary Commission for England alongside a confirmatory statement that the Council's current number of councillors (35) is its preferred number.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. – 7.36p.m.

Chair at the meeting on
22nd February 2022