

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 3rd November, 2011.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Chairman), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr David Rose and Cllr Michael Smith

Officers: N. Schneider (CEO); J. Danks (R); J. Humphreys, S. McLurg (CESC); P. Dobson, R. McGuckin, R. Poundford, R. Kench, G. Clingan, D. Kitching (DNS); D. Bond, M. Waggott, N. Hart, J. Trainer and M. Jones (LD)

Also in attendance: Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Philip Dennis, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ken Lupton and Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg

Apologies:

CAB 69/11 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Rose declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Local Development Framework - Green Infrastructure Strategy as he was a Board Member of the Industry Nature Conservation Association

Cllr Harrington and Mrs McCoy each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as a result of their role as a Council representative on the North East Purchasing Organisation and the North East Regional Employers Association, respectively.

Councillor Cook declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as a result of his employment on behalf of a local Parliamentary M.P

Councillor Nelson declared a personal, non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Impact of the Introduction of the Early Intervention Grant as he was a school governor of the Frederick Nattrass Primary School, Norton

CAB 70/11 **Minutes of the meetings held on 8 September 2011 and 6 October 2011.**

The minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 8 September 2011 and 6 October 201 were signed as a correct record.

CAB 71/11 **LA Nominations**

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school governors, approved at Minute 84 of the Cabinet (11th May 2000), Cabinet were requested to approve the nomination to school Governing Body as detailed within the report.

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RESOLVED that appointment be made to the vacant Governorships subject to successful List 99 check and Personal Disclosure, as follows:-

Conyers School – Mr P. Addison

Stockton First Federation – Cllr N. Cook

The Oak Tree Primary School – Cllr R. Gibson

Whinstone Primary School – Cllr G.Corr

CAB 72/11 Officer Led Task and Finish EIT Review of the Impact of the Introduction of the Early Intervention Grant

Members considered a report relating to a Task and Finish review of the impact of the introduction of the Early Intervention Grant.

It was explained that this was the fourth and final report on this issue and set out recommendations for redesigning the Early Years Services in the Borough.

The report proposed a new approach to Early Years operations which would deliver a more targeted, partnership based service with a commitment to early intervention support. The new approach would deliver annual cost savings of approximately £2m.

The proposals would ensure that the service would continue to be available throughout the Borough but would be concentrated to support families with the greatest needs. Members were provided with details of the criteria that had been used to determine need and noted a plan detailing the areas that had been identified as targeted and non targeted:

Targeted - Central East, Central South, Central West, Eastern

Non Targeted - Northern, Southern, Western

Children Centre Operations would be targeted to reflect the areas of need. There would be 2 centres in each of the 4 target areas, 1 centre in the Northern and Western areas and 2 centres in the Southern area.

In the 4 target areas it was proposed that the Council would continue to operate:

- Footsteps Children's Centre – Eastern Area
- Sunrise Children's Centre – Central East Area
- Redhill (and Ragworth) Children's Centre – Central West Area
- High Flyers Children's Centre – Central South

The Council would also seek a partner to operate another local partnership centre in each of the 4 target areas, the centres at Riverbank, Star (and Newtown Resources Centre), New Life and Frederick Nattrass would be made available through the procurement process as potential sites for these local partnership centres.

It was explained that proposals would see the transfer of Children's Centre operations at the Thornaby Family Centre (TFC) to the centres at High Flyers and Riverbank.

Members noted that it was proposed that a system be implemented that reflected the general and strong support for targeting but also addressed the many concerns raised, during consultation, about restriction on choice and the concerns that there were pockets of need across the Borough which did not fit within the identified target areas. The proposed system was that each Centre would be given an operating profile to support its targeting aims. For example the centres in the target areas would be required to retain a percentage of their operating time for families in the target area. These would be “closed” sessions and would be used for specific targeted activities with local or vulnerable groups. Beyond this, centres would be allowed to operate open sessions which would be available to anyone. It was proposed that a policy allowing charging for services be adopted but which differentiated between target and non target areas. Centres in non target areas would be allowed greater freedom to charge for services whilst restrictions would be placed on charging in target areas.

Cabinet noted that proposals looked to increase partnership working in this area as a means of generating cost savings and as the optimal delivery method.

A local partnership model was proposed where local voluntary organisations, charities, schools, parents’ groups and private organisations were contracted to work with the Council to play a major role in running a Children’s Centre in each of the target areas. Links with health partners would be maintained. Members noted the benefits to adopting the local partnership model. It was proposed that a partner be sought with a proven track record to operate 1 of the 2 centres in each of the 4 target areas.

With regard to the non target areas it was proposed that the Children’s Centres be delivered by contracts. These centres would be delivered from anywhere in the 3 areas and could be delivered by a community group, a group of parents, a school or a private company.

The intention was to run a procurement process, beginning in early December 2011 which would seek bids to run the 4 local partnership centres in the target areas and the 4 centres in the non target areas. The process would be structured around a competitive tendering process with a short listing based on outline business cases prepared in response to a specification for each centre. The specification would detail operational requirements as well as details about available assets and potential TUPE considerations. The intention would be to short list bids early in 2012 and to make appointments by April 2012 with transition to new operations between April and June 2012.

It was agreed that the proposals outlined, to deliver an effective front line targeted service with strong partnerships had to be underpinned by streamlined and efficient central support service. To achieve this it was proposed to bring the management of Early Years services together in one place – in the Children’s Schools and Complex Needs Service. It was considered that there were real benefits to be gained from bringing all staff involved in Early Years services together in one service. Whilst it was recognised that the teams already worked closely it was hoped that the joint working would be further strengthened by bringing the teams together. Members noted some of those benefits.

It was also proposed that some of the work of the Home Visiting teams which

currently operated within the Children's Centre structure would be transferred out of the Early Years Service into the Children and Young People's Operational Service. The home visiting service already worked closely with the Children's Social Care Service and carried out vital early intervention, preventative work with families. It was the view of the review team that those aspects of the work could be better co-ordinated and delivered as part of the targeted social care

The outline structural arrangements had been reviewed by and supported by the Children and Young People's Select Committee.

The review had looked in detail at the work of 303 employees and had proposed a new structure based on general principles outlined previously. It was proposed that formal consultation would begin with employees and unions on 11 November 2011 and that new structures would be communicated to staff then. Consultation had been taking place with union representatives throughout the review on a fortnightly basis. This would be maintained throughout the formal phase of the discussions.

Members noted that the proposals would lead to a net reduction in posts. The approach to achieving the reduction would be to maximise voluntary redundancy requests and as far as possible to avoid compulsory redundancies. An Equality Impact Assessment had also been carried out on the proposals and full details of the consultation exercise would be made available in the Members Library.

It was noted that the procurement process to run the 4 local partnership centres in the target areas and the 4 non target centres in the north, west and south, would commence in December and would contain conditions that would guarantee the accountability of the partnership organisation(s) involved. It was also requested that officers investigate the potential for the premises of partner organisations in Ingleby Barwick to be used as the possible host for future youth café provision, given that an appropriate location had as yet been identified.

RESOLVED that

1. A new targeted and partnership based approach to the delivery of Early Years Services in the Borough be supported.
2. The procurement process to seek a partner to deliver Children's Centre operations in the 4 target areas of the Borough and a provider to deliver Children's Centre services in the 3 non target areas of the Borough be approved and authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care, in consultation with the lead Cabinet Member, to award contracts on completion of the procurement process.
3. The transfer of Early Years services from Thornaby Family Centre to Riverbank and High Flyers Children's Centres be approved.
4. The start of the formal consultation with Unions and employees to support the redesigned Early Years Service be approved on the basis set out above and in the report and authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Children, Education and Social Care, in consultation with the lead Cabinet Member, to implement the new staffing structures on completion of the consultation.

5. Officers investigate the potential for the premises of partner organisations in Ingleby Barwick to be used as the possible host for future youth café provision, given that an appropriate location had as yet been identified.

**CAB
73/11** **Economic Climate Report**

Cabinet considered a monthly update report providing members with an overview of the current economic climate, outlining the effects that this was having on Stockton Borough, and the mitigations already in place and those being developed.

Members noted some of the positive and negative developments since the last report. Details of the support on offer to people and businesses was also provided.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the work being undertaken supported.

**CAB
74/11** **Local Development Framework - Stockton on Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy**

Members considered a composite report covering three areas that formed part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, including the Environment Development Plan Document and Regeneration Development Plan Document.

It was explained that, collectively, these documents and the associated information would be used in the determination of planning applications. They would also help to underpin and inform many future work programmes developed by Stockton Borough Council and partner organisations:

Members noted that the Green Infrastructure Strategy set out the strategic objectives for green infrastructure planning in the Borough, and identified a green infrastructure network which would be delivered and enhanced through the spatial planning process and other mechanisms. An earlier consultation draft had been approved by Cabinet in June 2009. The Final Draft was provided to members and it was explained that it had been prepared by the Borough Council on behalf of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group. The group comprised officer representatives from the Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Groundwork North East, Industry Nature Conservation Association (INCA), Natural England, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.

Cabinet was informed that the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group would oversee the preparation of a partnership Action Plan and support its delivery. In doing so, the Steering Group would continue to liaise with other partners through Stockton Renaissance.

With regard to Local Wildlife and Geological Sites, often referred to simply as 'Local Sites' it was noted that these were non statutory areas, which were

considered to be of local importance for biodiversity and/or geodiversity. A study had been undertaken to identify a number of such sites across the Borough. In accordance with government guidance, the criteria used to select these 'Local Sites' was agreed through the 'local sites partnership', in this case the Tees Valley Biodiversity Partnership Steering Group. The sites were detailed on a plan provided to Cabinet.

Information held on Local Sites would help to inform the on-going work of the Council and its partners in relation to biodiversity. In addition, under the new Single Data List published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, local authorities were required to submit annual data to central government on the 'proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management was being achieved'.

Cabinet noted that the Council had commissioned research to provide a robust analysis of the Borough's rural and urban fringe landscapes and to determine the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area was able to accommodate change. The study categorised the Borough's landscape into seven Landscape Character Areas each comprising a number of smaller Landscape Units. Members were provided with a plan of the Borough showing this. Information on landscape character would help to inform the on-going work of the Council and its partners in relation to landscape conservation and enhancement.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy, data on Local Wildlife and Geological Sites and Stockton-on-Tees Landscape Character Assessment & Capacity Study be approved as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework, including the Environment and Regeneration Development Plan Documents.
2. The publication of the Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Strategy be endorsed.
3. Stockton-on-Tees Green Infrastructure Steering Group be tasked to prepare and oversee delivery of an overarching partnership Action Plan, in liaison with a wider network of partners.
4. Officers be tasked to work in liaison with Ward Councillors, Area Partnership Boards, Town/Parish Councils and other partners to identify local green infrastructure projects to be delivered by Stockton Borough Council or other delivery partners as part of the overarching Action Plan.

**CAB
75/11**

Billingham Town Centre Regeneration

Members considered a report that dealt with issues relating to the regeneration of Billingham Town Centre.

Cabinet was reminded that the Council's freehold interest in Billingham town centre was sold to Halladale UK (now Stockland UK) in July 2007.

A masterplan for the regeneration of the town centre included, amongst other

things, provision of a 35,000ft² foodstore in West Precinct, new paving and public realm, new public toilets, new shop unit next to the Police Station, further new shop unit adjacent to Billingham Arms and Billingham Forum and a wide range of measures to improve the appearance of the centre and take measures to reduce the pigeon population.

An agreement was reached between the Council and Stockland UK which covered financial contributions from the Council to Stockland UK, based upon agreed criteria (see preceding paragraph) linked to development progress in the town centre.

It was explained that, in the last twelve months, Stockland UK had secured planning permission for a 16,000ft² foodstore adjacent to the Billingham Arms and Billingham Forum, a new B&M store had opened in 1 East Precinct, creating 40 jobs, planning permission had been granted for the merger and extension of units 27-31 on Queensway to facilitate a Poundland store, due to open in early 2012.

Refurbishment and repair works had taken place to ensure that the spiral ramp, which provided access to first floor shops complied with Health and Safety regulations and the centre remained over 95% let (this figure excluded units in West Precinct which had been kept un-let to facilitate the proposed supermarket development).

These positive developments had been supported by the Council through £18.5million investment in state of the art leisure facilities at the refurbished Billingham Forum, which opened in June 2011 along with investment in improvements to John Whitehead Park. An options appraisal for delivering a combined customer service facility, library and office accommodation was being carried out, whilst discussions with the PCT were ongoing regarding the inclusion of a health element as part of the scheme.

Despite these positive developments, Stockland UK had been unable to secure a supermarket operator in West Precinct. As a result of this, Stockland UK recently approached the Council to re-negotiate terms within the existing sale agreement that would enable a meaningful development scheme to go ahead in the town centre in the absence of a major foodstore.

During recent discussions with Stockland UK involving senior Council officers and Billingham Ward Members it was acknowledged that Stockland UK had committed significant time and resources in attempting to secure a supermarket operator and there was an acceptance that none of the major supermarket operators were prepared to develop a store in this location.

The commitment from both parties, to take forward a redevelopment scheme in the absence of a foodstore remained. Stockland were in advanced negotiations with a number of non-food retailers who had shown interest in taking up the vacant ground floor units in West Precinct, improving the retail offer and providing a large, non-food anchor store at the Western end of the town centre.

Council officers were taking a proactive role in developing the detail of a redevelopment scheme that would see the release of Council capital alongside

investment from Stockland UK enabling redevelopment to be moved forward, beginning in early 2012.

On that basis Council officers would work with Stockland UK to establish a schedule of improvements and redevelopment, and negotiate a level of capital contribution from the Council and Stockland UK. Those negotiations would ultimately culminate in the variation of the existing sale agreement to be approved as recommended.

It was noted that £1.75million had been retained from the capital receipt received from the sale of Billingham Town Centre. Contributions to the revised regeneration scheme would not exceed that amount.

RESOLVED that:

1. The commitment of capital resource to support Stockland UK to deliver a redevelopment scheme for Billingham town centre under revisions to the existing sale agreement be approved
2. The Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport, Director of Resources and Director of Law and Democracy, to agree the detail of the revised sale agreement and enter into all necessary legal agreements to facilitate the redevelopment scheme.

**CAB
76/11**

COMMUNITY ENERGY SAVING PROGRAMME

Cabinet considered a report relating to the Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) which was a Government initiative targeting low income areas to deliver a range of home energy efficiency measures; the aim being, to alleviate fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions. The Programme was introduced in September 2009 and was set to run until December 2012.

British Gas had approached Stockton-on-Tees with proposals to deliver a Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) within a number of the Super Output Areas (SoAs) within the borough that met the CESP criteria.

There were 16 areas within Stockton which were eligible for CESP projects. Initial discussions with British Gas had identified seven areas within the Borough, which focussed solely on solid wall properties and which would deliver cost effective CESP schemes; Newtown, Victoria, three areas within Parkfield and two areas within Portrack and Tilery.

To take forward any of these schemes required a level of match funding dependent upon the range of measures to be delivered and the carbon savings achievable. This requirement had been a major hurdle to deliver on CESP in the borough, resulting in long and frustrating discussions with a number of the energy supply companies over the last two years.

Parkfield / Mill Lane would be the preferred area to target the CESP resources being offered by British Gas. Members were reminded that this area included the Parkfield Housing Market Renewal (HMR) project which was subject to a

HMR Transition Fund bid. Pending a successful bid outcome, the Council had identified £400k for face lift improvement works to 80 properties which were no longer proposed for demolition. It was proposed to use this £400k as a means of part-matching the CESP funding offer from British Gas.

Newtown, Victoria, Portrack and Tilery SoAs had substantial social housing elements included where the energy efficiency of the stock was already at a level above the average within the private sector housing stock which meant that delivering a CESP in those areas would not achieve the same impact on fuel poverty.

Three schemes in Parkfield could be taken forward, which would deliver a £3.3m housing project, requiring match funding of £888,900 from Stockton Borough Council.

Assuming the HMR Transition Fund bid was successful then the £400k identified by the Council for 'facelift' improvement works would leave the amount of further match funding required by the council to be approx £488,940.

British Gas would fully manage the scheme including engagement with individual house holders, full house surveys and organisation of the installation work including all legal, health and safety and customer relationship requirements.

RESOLVED that:

1. Pending a successful HMR Transition Fund bid, the re-direction of the £400k of council resources, currently approved for facelift improvement works be approved to be used as part of the necessary CESP match funding.
2. The allocation of an additional £489k resource be approved, to match the proposal for a CESP scheme in Parkfield / Mill Lane from the Council's share of the VAT shelter. If the outcome of the HMR Transition Fund Bid was unsuccessful this allocation would increase to £889k.
3. Delegated authority, to obtain the most advantageous offer for the council and the community, from the energy suppliers, be given to the Head of Technical Services in consultation with cabinet members for Environment and Housing & Community Safety.

**CAB
77/11**

Stockton's Major Events Summary 2011 and Preparations for 2012

Members considered a report relating to the major events that had taken place in Stockton during 2011.

The spring and summer of 2011 saw the expansion and improvement of some of the Council's key culture and leisure events. Cabinet was provided with information and images relating to those events, including the River Rat Race, Triathlon, Cycling Festival, Billingham International Folklore Festival (BIFF) and Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF). In addition there was a fundamental change to the Stockton Riverside Fringe which became the Weekender Festival. The Council also maintained a range of popular local events and celebrated a number of significant dates.

With an emphasis on the Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF) as its highest profile Festival, members were provided with outcomes and impacts of the 2011 events.

Members noted the success of SIRF and the other events. Consideration was also given to technical, health and safety, marketing, communications and curatorial issues surrounding events.

Cabinet looked at the opportunities and challenges arising from the coincidence of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the London Olympics, and the 25th anniversary of SIRF in 2012.

RESOLVED that:

1. The success of SIRF and the other signature events in 2011 be noted.
2. Proposals for an enhanced event programme in 2012, associated with the Diamond Jubilee, London 2012 Olympics, and 25th SIRF, be endorsed.

**CAB
78/11** **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings of various bodies.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be received/approved, as appropriate:-

Local Safeguarding Children Board – 17 March 2011

Local Safeguarding Children Board – 16 June 2011

Children's Trust Board – 30 June 2011

Safer Stockton Partnership – 16 August 2011

Northern Area Partnership Board – 3 September 2011

Housing and Neighbourhood Partnership – 20 September 2011

Western Area Partnership – 26 September 2011

Eastern Area Partnership – 27 September 2011

**CAB
79/11** **Future Membership of Local Government Association**

Cabinet considered a report relating to its membership of the Local Government Association (LGA).

Members were reminded that the LGA lobbied and campaigned for changes in policy, legislation and funding on behalf its member Councils. Whilst the membership costs had reduced since 2006/7 they were £42,870 for the financial year 2011/12. Withdrawal from this annual subscription required a 12 month notice period.

Cabinet was provided with background to the LGA and the benefits currently provided through the annual subscription.

To inform a decision about future membership, it was suggested that a Task and Finish Review, as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme, possibly through the Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee, consider the benefits, value for money, role and function of the LGA. It was noted that

any decision to widen the remit of the review to possibly include other organisations the Council paid subscription to, would be subject to future consideration as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme discussions.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council issues a 12 month notice to the LGA to withdraw subscription.
2. The Executive Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider including a Task and Finish review of the LGA benefits as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme.

CAB 80/11 Sex Establishment Licensing Policy

Members considered a report relating to the adoption of a Sex Establishment Licensing policy following consultation with relevant stakeholders.

It was explained that on 22nd December 2010 Cabinet determined that a draft Sexual Establishments Policy by officers should be prepared for consultation with relevant parties.

On 26th July 2010 the Licensing Committee determined that the Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services carry out consultation on the draft policy document with all relevant stakeholders and that the draft Sex Establishment Policy together with the results of the consultation exercise be referred to Cabinet for approval.

Consultation on the draft policy was undertaken with:

- Cleveland Police Force;
- Cleveland Fire Brigade;
- Existing Premise Licence holders;
- Existing Club Premise Certificate holders;
- Existing Personal License holders;
- Representatives of businesses and residents in the Stockton Borough Council area;
- The Local Safeguarding Children's Board;
- Trade bodies and Associations; and
- A number of Solicitors Practices who undertake licensing work in this area.

Additionally a notice was placed in the local press and copies of the consultation document placed on the Trading Standards and Licensing website.

Comments received supported the introduction of the draft policy.

Members were provided with the draft Sex Establishment Licensing Policy.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the adoption of the draft Sex Establishment Licensing Policy in relation to applications made under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 3 as amended by Section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009 be adopted.

CAB Parliamentary Constituencies Review

Cabinet was reminded that the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 required there to be a fixed number of 600 constituencies for the UK, as opposed to the current 650. Within that the North East had been allocated 26 constituencies, as opposed to the current 29.

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) had recently produced initial proposals for England, which included those relevant to Stockton on Tees Borough area. Initial responses to the proposals had to be submitted to the BCE by 5 December 2011. Members had been provided with details of the proposals and there had been a Members' Policy Seminar held on Monday 10th October 2011 where views were canvassed. Further views were invited at two drop in sessions. The following principal comments, coming from those events, were considered to be:-

(i) General concern regarding the impact on community boundaries and the loss of community identities as a result of all the proposals.

(ii) The proposals would create four Members of Parliament for the Stockton Borough area. This would inevitably result in an increased use of the Council's resources than at present and would not, therefore, be cost effective.

(iii) The impact of the proposals at election time should not be underestimated. There would be voter confusion, with parts of the same communities voting for different Members of Parliament. The administration of elections for four different constituencies would be logistically complex and would require an increased use of resources.

(iv) In relation to the proposals for Hartlepool BC if the Billingham North ward was to remain a part of the proposed constituency, it was recommended that it be renamed Hartlepool and Billingham North BC.

However, there was widespread concern amongst residents and Members regarding the splitting of the Billingham wards and communities in this way. It was, therefore, recommended that Billingham North was retained with other Billingham wards, in any new, revised proposals.

(v) As regards the Middlesbrough BC, it was recommended that the constituency be renamed Middlesbrough and Thornaby BC

(vi) With regard to the Sedgefield and Yarm CC, the majority of the electorate would be Stockton Borough residents. The constituency should be a Stockton Borough, not County Constituency, administered by/on behalf of the Borough Council at elections. It was also recommended that it be renamed South West Stockton and Sedgefield BC

The Parkfield and Oxbridge ward was a Stockton Town Centre ward and should accordingly be retained as part of the new Stockton and Billingham BC (subject to the comments which follow regarding the name of that constituency).

(vii) In relation to the Stockton and Billingham BC, the reference to Billingham would be confusing given that, at present, it would not include the Billingham North Ward. It should, therefore, be renamed North Stockton BC. It should

also include the Stockton Town Centre ward of Parkfield and Oxbridge.

Cabinet endorsed the above comments for submission to Council for consideration, subject to the following changes and suggested that they be accompanied by a statement highlighting the impact these proposals would have on local communities with illogical parliamentary boundaries being created in order to comply with the electoral quota requirement specified within the legislation, and with separate constituencies being formed and sometimes separated only by the width of the same street:-

- the comments at paragraph (iv) be inverted;
- paragraphs vi) and vii) be amended to delete reference to Stockton Town Centre Ward and instead to refer to the Parkfield and Oxbridge Ward being closely associated with Stockton Town Centre.

Members were reminded of the full consultation process, which included a second consultation period, the opportunity for revised proposals, and a final consultation period prior to the Final Recommendations and Report being published.

RECOMMENDED to Council that

1. The comments specified above and at paragraph 18 of the report regarding the initial proposals produced by the Boundary Commission for England form the Authority's formal representations, subject to:-

- an accompanying statement highlighting the impact these proposals would have on local communities with illogical parliamentary boundaries being created in order to comply with the electoral quota requirement specified within the legislation, and with separate constituencies being formed and sometimes separated only by the width of the same street;**

- the comments at paragraph (iv) being inverted;**

- paragraphs vi) and vii) being amended to delete reference to Stockton Town Centre Ward and instead referring to the Parkfield and Oxbridge Ward being closely associated with Stockton Town Centre.**

2. Subject to this, the Director of Law and Democracy be authorised to submit the agreed representations to the Boundary Commission for England before the deadline of 5 December.

3. A further report be submitted to Cabinet following the end of the initial consultation period.