

Cabinet

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday, 23rd June, 2022.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook(Chair), Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Lisa Evans , Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Michael Smith and Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E.

Officers: Julie Danks (MD), Beccy Brown, Julie Butcher, Jonathan Nertney, Judy Trainer, Peter Bell (CS), Garry Cummings (F,D&R&DMD), Reuben Kench (CS,E&C), Ann Workman (A&H).

Also in attendance: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair of Children and Young People Select Committee).

Apologies: None.

CAB Evacuation Procedure

1/22

The Evacuation Procedure was noted.

CAB Declarations of Interest

2/22

There were no interests declared.

CAB Minutes

3/22

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2022 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

CAB Council Plan 2021-24 Update

4/22

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the Council Plan 2021/24 and progress on the priority actions in 2021/22.

The report focused on the implementation of the Council Plan 2021/24. This was therefore the year end update on progress during 2021/22.

Members were reminded that a new Council Plan 2022/25 was agreed by Cabinet in February 2022 and at Council in March 2022.

An update on each of the Council Plan priorities was attached to the report. The report indicated significant progress in all areas of this year's priorities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB Stockton on Tees - Electoral Review - Final Outcome and Next Steps

5/22

Consideration was given to a report that sets out the final recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and next steps for implementing the changes.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) identified Stockton-on-Tees as requiring an electoral review given the length of time since

the last review was carried out.

The review was carried out in stages, initially looking at council size, asking for suggestions on the potential distribution of wards and redrafting of ward boundaries, including consideration of ward name changes. The Council actively participated in the review and encouraged public participation.

In September 2020, the Council submitted a proposal on the future size of the council, as did political groups and members of the public. The LGBCE considered all the submissions and was minded to retain a council size of 56 Members.

The LGBCE produced their own recommendations on ward boundaries and also asked for views on the change of name for wards in the Borough. The initial consultation period closed on 19 July 2021 and this was followed by a further limited consultation from 23 November 2021 to 10 January 2022. After considering all submissions, the LGBCE published their final recommendations on 29 March 2022.

The final recommendations confirmed a Council size of 56 Councillors (the same number as there are now), 27 wards (one more than there are now) and changes to the boundaries of 23 wards with four remaining the same. In addition, as a result of the proposed new ward boundaries, revised parish electoral arrangements had been agreed for Billingham Town Council, Egglecliffe, Grindon and Thorpe Thewles, Ingleby Barwick, Kirklevington and Castlelevington and Thornaby. Full details of the changes can be found at the LGBCE website.

An Order would be laid in Parliament and, subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in May 2023.

With regard to the next steps as a result of changes to wards and boundaries, it would be necessary to conduct an interim polling district review.

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a requirement to conduct reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every five years. Although not a compulsory review, the same processes should be undertaken for the areas affected by the interim review. The next compulsory review must be started and completed between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.

A Council's area was divided into polling districts with one or more districts making up a ward, with a polling place being the area or building within a polling district in which a polling station is situated.

Polling districts would need to be revised to ensure that they were co-terminus with the new ward boundaries. In addition, the review would need to consider:

- Polling Districts - Are they well defined? Do they follow natural boundaries? Are there suitable transport links? Are there any obstacles to crossing polling district boundaries?
- Polling Places – The location, size and accessibility of the polling place

and its availability now and in the future

- Polling Stations – The suitability and accessibility of the room or area for use as a polling station. A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the Local Authority, polling stations are chosen by the relevant Returning Officer for the election

The Electoral Commission Guidance stated:

‘Where the polling district/place review is to be carried out before the new electoral boundaries are fully in force, it will need to be based on the current electoral boundaries but should also take any new boundaries that are not yet in force into account. To avoid having to review the polling districts and polling places again once the new boundaries are fully in force, any parts of existing electoral areas that will be split when the new boundaries come into effect could be made into separate polling districts as part of the review.’

Also, until the new boundaries were fully in force, the register would need to be constructed in a way that was capable of reflecting the current and the new boundaries. Again, this could be achieved by making any parts of existing electoral areas that would be split when the new boundaries come into effect into separate polling districts.

For the same reasons where, as a result of a review of one set of electoral boundaries, the boundaries for different elections were no longer co-terminous, those areas that were no longer co-terminous could also be made into separate polling districts.

In short, polling districts would need to be drawn to reflect the needs of both existing and future ward boundaries. This would be achieved by establishing temporary polling districts for the period 1 December 2022 to 1 December 2023 which would then be merged into appropriate adjoining polling districts on publication of the Revised Register on 1 December 2023. The interim polling district review would therefore consult on temporary and longer-term changes.

The timescales for the review would be as follows:

May 2022 – September 2022 – Preparation and Scoping

- Shape files of the new boundaries are imported into bespoke mapping software along with existing parish boundaries, polling districts, electorate data, and polling stations
- Initial work to be carried out to identify which current polling districts fall wholly within the new ward boundary areas and where current polling districts require splitting to fall within ward boundaries
- Manual creation within the bespoke mapping software to create the temporary polling districts
- Analysis of the temporary polling districts for electorate numbers in preparation for merging into the longer-term solution
- Identifying where the merges of temporary and existing polling districts may occur, ensuring that Parish Boundaries are adhered to
- Renaming polling districts with unique identifiers, to allow for the Electoral Register to reflect the old and new arrangements

- Identifying any gaps in polling stations once the ward / polling district boundaries are reconfigured. i.e. where previously there has been the use of combined stations for two polling districts that are no longer in the same ward
- Identifying potential new stations and assessing suitability
- Preparation of proposal documentation including but not limited to maps of revised polling district areas, both temporary and long-term solutions, as well as suitability and accessibility statements for any proposed new polling places / stations

Stage 1 - Notification of the Review - 19 September 2022 – 14 October 2022

Statutory Notice/ information to be displayed/ sent to:

- Municipal buildings
- Libraries
- Website
- Stockton News
- All Members
- Parish Clerks
- MPs
- Disability Groups
- BME Groups
- Press Release

Stage 2 – Consultation – 14 October 2022 – 11 November 2022

Publish Acting Returning Officer submission and consult widely with

- Electors
- Political Parties
- MPs
- All Councillors
- Parish Councils
- Council departments
- Presiding Officers/ PSIs
- Disability Groups
- Other interested persons/ bodies

Stage 3 – Concluding the review

Consider representations and make final proposals:

- 17 November 2022 – Cabinet
- 23 November 2022 – Council

Publish Revised Register – 1 December 2022

Publication of notice stating alterations

Stage 4 – Publishing the conclusions of the review

Make available for public inspection the conclusions of the review and all correspondence and minutes.

Publication and Access to the Register

Following publication of the Revised Register on 1 December 2022, elected representatives would still have access to those parts of the Register they were entitled to receive. This entitlement would continue until they cease to be in office. They would not have access to other parts of the Electoral Register under new ward boundaries.

Use of the Register for the 2023 Elections

From the last date for the publication of the Notice of Election (27 March 2023), candidates and agents would be entitled to receive copies of the Register under the new ward boundaries.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB 6/22 **Minutes of Various Bodies**

Consideration was given to a report that provided the minutes of various bodies.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to members for consideration:-

Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board – 10 February 2022
Safer Stockton Partnership- 23 March 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes as detailed be received.

CAB 7/22 **Final Report of the Children and Young People Select Committee - Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty**

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of Child Poverty.

The overall aim of the review was to gain an insight and understand the specific issues relating to child poverty. The Select Committee had considered evidence from North East Child Poverty Commission, Council Officers, SDAIS, Catalyst, TEWV, 0-19 Service Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust and Thrive.

RESOLVED that:-

1. A family poverty profile be compiled and updated annually from available data and input from those with lived experience and is used to identify a key priority for targeted action each year; an initial focus being take up of Free School Meals for those eligible and in need.
2. Support be offered to families in poverty is enhanced through:
 - a. A more integrated and visible offer for families experiencing poverty focusing on information, advice, financial and other support
 - b. Roll out of Poverty Proofing the School Day across all Stockton Schools
 - c. Establishing a mutual aid/ giving scheme, in partnership with Catalyst, to

facilitate community giving

d. Ensuring an enhanced support offer is available for communities and areas targeted through the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Framework

3. Specific interventions be put in place focusing on:

a. Healthy Food through the delivery of cooking and budgeting skills in schools, linked to Healthy Schools

b. Help with energy costs through warm energy schemes/ credits etc.

c. Digital inclusion for all children including schemes to re-use redundant laptops and roll out of skills training and family learning

4. Subject to funding, a direct payments scheme be developed for those identified as in need, building on the examples of vouchers during the pandemic.

5. All subsidy policies are reviewed and revised as appropriate to provide streamlined and enhanced support for families.

**CAB
8/22**

Local Authority School Governors

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school/academy governors, approved as Minute CAB27/13 of the Cabinet (13 June 2013), Cabinet was invited to consider the nominations to school/academy Governing Bodies listed as an attachment to the report.

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made to the vacant Governorships in line with agreed procedures subject to a Personal Disclosure and DBS clearance:-

William Cassidi Primary School - Veronica Fletcher (School Nomination – Re-appointment)

Tilery Primary School - Liz Miller (School Nomination – Re-appointment)

St John the Baptist Primary School - Hilary Vickers (School Nomination)

Northfield School – Miriam Stanton (School Nomination – Re-appointment)