

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Committee:** Electoral and Community Governance Review Committee    **Date:** Thursday, 8 March 2012

**Place:** Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping    **Time:** 7.00 - 7.35 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors C Whitbread (Chairman), D Stallan (Vice-Chairman), J Philip and J M Whitehouse

**Other Councillors:** Councillors R Bassett

**Apologies:** C Finn and D Jacobs

**Officers Present:** I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), W MacLeod (Elections Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant)

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### **32. Substitute Members (Council Minute 39 - 23.7.02)**

Councillor J Whitehouse attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor D Jacobs.

### **33. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

### **34. Terms of Reference**

The Terms of reference were noted.

### **35. Minutes**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **36. Review of Parliamentary Constituencies - Secondary Consultation**

The Assistant to the Chief Executive reported on the second round of consultation on the Boundary Commission for England's proposals for the new Parliamentary Constituencies which gave respondents the opportunity of commenting on the views of others submitted at stage one and in particular views on the three local Constituencies: Epping Forest, Harlow and Brentwood & Ongar.

The representations received regarding the Brentwood and Ongar (B&O) Constituency (B&O) disagreed with the inclusion of the Orsett Ward in Thurrock within the B&O Constituency and made the alternative suggestion that the boundaries should be re-drawn to include Lambourne and Chigwell Row Wards in that constituency. One Epping Forest District Councillor also argued that Lambourne

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should remain with the B&O Constituency. One political party representative had supported Orsett remaining in Basildon and Thurrock East (B&TE) Constituency and that Lambourne and Chigwell Row should be transferred to B&O Constituency, with Lower Nazeing becoming part of the EF Constituency.

The Committee acknowledged the arguments presented for Orsett remaining within B&TE Constituency and felt that bearing in mind the electorate would still be within the tolerance range set by the Boundary Commission, this was possible. Members concluded that they agreed with the Boundary Commission's current proposals for retaining the present EF constituency plus the Lambourne Ward and supported a suggestion that of the boundary anomaly at Matching Green should be raised once more.

The Committee's attention was also drawn to representations from Councillor Sartin on the proposal suggesting moving the Lower Nazeing Ward into EF Constituency. Councillor Sartin felt that strong community links and synergies between Roydon and Lower Nazeing would be destroyed if they were placed in different constituency leaving Roydon isolated. Councillor Bassett echoed Councillor Sartin sentiments and felt that not keeping these two wards together within the Harlow Constituency might result in Roydon being included as an urban area around Harlow.

The Committee sympathised with both District Councillors but decided that the Council's response should remain the same and give support to the Boundary Commission's original proposals. The Committee was advised that this would not prevent individuals from responding to the comments.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Council's original response to the proposals of the boundary Commission be re-affirmed;
- (2) That in responding to the second stage consultation the Returning Officer be asked to limit the Council's comments to the following:
  - (a) that the Council continues to support the original proposals of the Commissions, namely the retention of the present Epping Forest Constituency and the addition of Lambourne Ward;
  - (b) that the Council reiterates its comments about the boundary anomaly at Matching Green as raised previously; and
  - (c) that the electorates for Brentwood and Ongar and Epping Forest will remain within the statutory tolerances, even if Orsett Ward is removed from Brentwood and Ongar, thereby avoiding the need to make any other changes; and
- (3) That Councillors Bassett and Sartin be advised to submit their views on the Lower Nazeing and Roydon Wards to the Local Government Boundary Commission on a personal basis.

**CHAIRMAN**