

General Purposes and Audit Committee

**Meeting held on Tuesday 29 November 2016 at 6:30pm in F4/F5, Town Hall,
Katharine Street, Croydon**

MINUTES - PART A

Present: Councillor Kathy Bee (Vice Chair)
Councillors Jan Buttinger, Sherwan Chowdhury, Pat Clouder, Jason Cummings, Mike Fisher, Patricia Hay-Justice, Steve Holland, Humayun Kabir, and Joy Prince
Mr Nero Ughwujabo

Also present: Councillor Simon Hall, Cabinet Member for Finance & Treasury
Sarah Ireland, Director of Strategy, Communities & Commissioning
Charlotte Rohan, Head of SCC Place
Steve Dennington, Head of Spatial Planning
Tim Naylor, Head of Regeneration and Partnerships
Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Acting Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Apologies: Councillors Karen Jewitt and Jeet Bains, and Mr Muffaddal Kapasi

MINUTES - PART A

A41/16 Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

A42/16 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no urgent items of business.

A43/16 Exempt Items

The Committee **noted** that there were no Part B agenda items.

A44/16 Boundary Review Consultation Response from Croydon Council

Councillor Simon Hall, Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury, informed the Committee that the boundary review was an opportunity to address the electoral inequality found within the borough and which would increase with the anticipated rise in population. In drawing up the proposed submission from the Council officers had looked at the geography of the borough and the established communities. The Cabinet Member stated that he hoped Members would recognise the integrity of the work completed by officers.

Sarah Ireland, Director of Strategy, Communities & Commissioning, introduced the presentation on the response from Croydon Council to the Boundary Review consultation. The Director of Strategy, Communities & Commissioning stated that the Boundary Commission review was a Local Government review which had been requested by the council in response to concerns regarding the growth of the borough. Phase 1 had been submitted earlier in 2016 with a recommendation of 70 councillors across the borough. Phase 2 submissions would be due on 5 December 2016 with final recommendations to be laid before Parliament in June 2017.

The Committee were provided with a presentation which gave an overview of the proposed submission which built upon the foundation of the Local Plan and looked at the built and natural environment. Charlotte Rohan, Head of SCC Place, gave an outline of the proposed submission and the methodology used to form the boundaries and wards. A copy of the presentation can be found published on the website.

The Vice-Chair thanked officers for their work on developing the warding proposals that were to be considered.

Members noted that the 16 places used by planning had been considered as part of the process of forming the ward boundaries, and stated that they would be interested to see the planning places mapped onto the warding proposal. The Director of Strategy, Communities & Commissioning confirmed that the mapping could be completed ahead of submission and would be circulated to Members for their information.

In response to Member questions officers informed the Committee that the ward names were the proposed names for the re-configuration of wards, however it was likely that other submissions would propose alternative titles. During the consultation stage in 2017 there would be an opportunity for communities to express their views on the recommendations from the Boundary Commission, including the names of wards.

Members noted that while the proposed ward boundaries generally followed natural boundaries and green spaces there were a few open spaces, such as in Thornton Heath, where the open space was split between two wards. The Head of SCC Place stated that consideration had been given to the usage and interest of particular areas by residents, and that was why some open spaces were split across wards.

Some Members noted that there had previously been some confusion with residents as to which ward they resided in and the proposed boundaries would clarify which ward they lived in. Furthermore, it was felt by some councillors there would be a greater connection to the district centres with proposed boundaries.

Some Members requested clarity with regards to the wording of

recommendation 1.2 of the report and the reason the Committee were not approving the final wording of the submission, in particular due to the political sensitivity of the report. Officers stated that the proposed warding would not change, however the commentary which accompanied the submission would be finalised following the meeting. The final submission would be circulated to Members.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury further stated that the boundaries proposed in the report would not be changed prior to submission and that the 16 wards would remain the same. The recommendation was in regards to the final narrative to be agreed by the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

The Acting Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that the decision was not an executive decision and had been delegated by Council. It was stated that the recommendation was appropriate with regards to the delegation from Council.

Councillor Cummings noted that process had been followed, however stated that the Minority Group had not been consulted on the proposed warding patterns and their knowledge of the local area had not been taken into account. The Opposition noted there was an opportunity to make their own submission.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Council's ward pattern for 2022, as set out at in the Appendix of the report, be agreed under the delegation given by the Council meeting on 17 October 2016; and
2. The authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chair of the General Purposes and Audit Committee, for the final warding submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England based upon the warding pattern set out in the Appendix of the report.

For (6): Councillors Kathy Bee, Sherwan Chowdhury, Pat Clouder, Patricia Hay-Justice, Humayun Kabir and Joy Prince.

Against (4): Councillors Jan Buttinger, Jason Cummings, Steve Hollands and Mike Fisher

A45/16

[The following motion is to be moved and seconded as the "camera resolution" where it is proposed to move into part B of a meeting]

The Chair informed the Committee that there was no business to be conducted in Part B of the agenda, in accordance with the Council's openness and transparency agenda.

MINUTES - PART B

None

The meeting ended at 19.17pm.