

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 3 January 2013.

PRESENT: Councillors Brunton (Chair), Councillors Arundale, Dryden, C Hobson, Kerr, Mawston, Sanderson, J Sharrocks (as substitute for Cole) and J A Walker and Williams.

OFFICERS: J Bennington, P Clark, P Clarke, C Davies and J Polson.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cole, McIntyre and P Purvis.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made at this point of the meeting.

12/75 MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 18 DECEMBER 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18 December 2012 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

12/76 BOUNDARY COMMISSION - ELECTORAL REVIEW

Further to the meeting of the Board held on 18 December 2012 the Chair referred to the schedule of additional meetings of the Board which had been arranged to consider the Electoral Review and referred to the issues upon which Members had requested further information.

It was confirmed that a letter had been forwarded to Redcar and Cleveland Council requesting if there was any scope in discussing current boundaries with particular regard to those areas within Redcar and Cleveland in the south east of the area which were closely affiliated to Middlesbrough boundaries.

Information was circulated at the meeting which provided a summary of the methodology used for projecting the size of the electorate in accordance with the Boundary Commission's guidance. The focus of the exercise was to balance the ONS population projections with the projected housing changes (building and demolition) to project the number of electors in each ward.

A basic assumption was that electors increased at the same rate as the ONS population projections for Middlesbrough's 17 year old plus population. ONS projections forecasted that Middlesbrough's 17+ population would grow by 0.1% i.e. 2011 population 111,300 and 2018 population 111,400.

In estimating the electorate in 2018 a further assumption was that the proportion of the 17+ population that were registered electors would remain the same between 2011 and 2018.

In 2011 the electorate of 101,468 was 91.166% of total 17+ population. In 2018, the 17+ population was projected to be 111,400. It was explained that applying the 91.166% gave an estimated electorate of 101,559 which was the key number. Ward changes had to reach this total.

The Council's Regeneration Team provided a list of all projected house building and demolitions per ward up to 2018. For the Borough as a whole the rate of change in housing was +4.39%, 58,300 households in 2011 and 60,857 in 2018, an additional 2,557 properties.

The Board was advised that as housing growth was faster than population growth adjustments had to be made to scale back the number of electors. Adjustments were then made for housing changes. In terms of new builds this was reported as a ratio of 1.7 electors per new

house (the average number of electors per new house built since 2001). In relation to demolitions it was explained that this was at a broadly similar level but varied from ward to ward based on detailed intelligence about occupancy. A final adjustment was made equally to each ward so that the total matched the Borough 2018 total electorate.

The information circulated included a map which showed the percentage variance between the 2018 projected electorate and the target electorate for each ward based on the data as outlined.

In response to Members' questions it was indicated that the details shown on the ward map circulated were regarded as a starting point to the exercise and that following ongoing work updated information would be provided hopefully by 17 January which would include an indication of where assumptions could be made regarding new build and what the broader changes would mean in population terms.

In commenting on the housing projections it was acknowledged that it was difficult to predict and such figures were based on where planning permissions had been granted or in were in the process of gaining planning permission or were identified in the Local Development Framework to come forward in 2018.

An indication was given as to how the estimated number of dwellings was calculated based on the guidance from the House Builders Federation and other sources from regular discussions with Developers and using local knowledge in understanding market conditions.

The Board acknowledged the difficulties in the current economic climate but were keen to seek assurances that every endeavour would be made to avoid triggering another electoral review. An indication was given of circumstances which had impacted on such calculations such as where developers had gone into liquidation or where schemes had been stalled.

Following Members' questions it was agreed that further information be provided regarding the projections with regard to Grey Towers Farm and other sites along the Parkway.

With regard to ongoing work in relation to Community Identity it was suggested that the Board would gain a better overall view following the Members Workshop which had been arranged on 10 January 2013 at 2.00p.m. or 5.30p.m. As part of the arrangements for the Workshop Members would be asked to identify areas within their part of the Town that formed natural communities with which residents could readily identify, and that would deliver convenient and effective local government in the future.

In the light of the Members' Workshop on 10 January and the progress of detailed information as requested by the Board the Chair confirmed that this would be taken into account in determining if there was sufficient business to be transacted to warrant holding the meeting of the Board scheduled for 9 January 2013.

ORDERED that the information provided be noted.