

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 23 January 2013.

PRESENT: Councillors Brunton (Chair), Councillors Cole, Davison (as substitute for Mawston), Dryden, Harvey, C Hobson, Junier (as substitute for P Purvis), Kerr, McIntyre, Sanderson, J A Walker and Williams.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Budd, Cox, Hawthorne, J Hobson, P Khan, McPartland and Taylor.

OFFICERS: J Bennington, P Clark, A Collins, C Davies, M Harvey and J Polson.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mawston and P Purvis.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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

12/90 BOUNDARY COMMISSION - ELECTORAL REVIEW

Since the meeting of the Board held on 17 January 2013 Officers had refined the information which had emanated from the Members' Workshops held on 10 January 2013 and mapped as closely as possible the 37 different areas of Town as clearly identifiable communities that met the Boundary Commission's definition.

All three Member Workshops had agreed on 20 clearly identifiable communities of Acklam, Beechwood, Berwick Hills, Brambles Farm, Brookfield, Coulby Newham, Easterside, Hemlington, Linthorpe, Marton, Marton Manor, Netherfields, Newport, North Ormesby, Nunthorpe, Pallister Park, Park End, Priestfields, Stainton, and Thorntree.

Two of the Member Workshops had agreed on six clearly identifiable communities of Grove Hill, Tollesby, Town Centre, Town Farm, West Lane and Whinney Banks.

One of the Member Workshops had identified 11 clearly identifiable communities of Boy'ds Estate, Gresham, Longlands, Ormesby, Prissick, Saltersgill, St Hilda's, St John's Gate, Thornton, Tollesby Hall and University.

In addition, Community Regeneration Officers had also identified three further areas as clearly identifiable communities of Breckon Hill, Little Ormesby (same boundaries as Ormesby referred to above) and Park.

It was acknowledged that whilst there were identified communities within the Boundary Commission's criteria there were significant differences in the sizes of the areas for example St John's Gate in comparison with Acklam and subsequent challenge which that presented in determining ward boundaries.

Reference was made to the Member presentations made at the meeting of the Board held on 17 January 2013 which had been mapped on the plans displayed at the meeting.

The Board was advised that following discussions the proposals of Councillor Williams after first revisions represented near agreement between Councillor Williams and the Conservative Group.

In consultation with Members, Officers had applied the projected 2018 elector figures to the Member presentations as displayed at the meeting. It was acknowledged that there were areas of commonality.

Following such an exercise modifications had been made to the Labour Group proposals in two areas. The first area involved minor changes to boundary proposals in respect of Neptune, Overdale, Thorntree, Brambles and Pallister. The other area related to Ironmasters

and Crescent and as a consequence changes to the West Linthorpe and Linthorpe Village ward boundary proposals. Officers were continuing to work on the variances around the assumptions which had been made around demolitions and new build.

The plan showing Councillor Williams' proposals was broadly the same with some changes in East Middlesbrough along with the Park and Linthorpe Wards. Should such proposals be pursued further work would be necessary in order to fulfil the necessary requirements in terms of the figures.

A plan was displayed which showed the MICA proposals of the redefined wards and projected elector numbers but because of the impact on other wards across the Town further detailed work would be required should the proposals be progressed.

The Board discussed the overall process in making a submission to the Boundary Commission including the possibility of making more than one submission. Given the current status of the presentations Members expressed reservations about the MICA proposals which did not take a whole Town approach and the ward boundary and the associated elector figures did not all fulfil the necessary Boundary Commission requirements. Members also indicated reservations about Councillor William's proposals in that not all the figures fulfilled the necessary requirements and concerns were also reiterated in respect of the boundary of two wards which divided the Thorntree community.

An opportunity was provided for Members to give a detailed examination of the plans displayed at the meeting.

In order to strengthen and ensure integrity of a submission to the Boundary Commission it was recommended and a vote taken that following the necessary refinement the Labour Group proposals be submitted to Council prior to submission to the Boundary Commission. It was also agreed that if so wished Officers would be able to give limited time and provide assistance to Members in respect of the other proposals.

ORDERED as follows:-

1. That following further refinement the Labour Group proposals be put forward to Council for consideration as the preferred option prior to submission to the Boundary Commission.
2. That the Officers be thanked for the significant work undertaken within a short timescale.
3. That a further update be considered at the meeting of the Board to be held on 30 January 2013.