

MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 31 October 2016 at 7pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Coughlin, Brenda Dacres, Joe Dromey, Alan Hall, Stella Jeffrey (Vice-Chair), Jamie Milne, John Paschoud (Chair), Jacq Paschoud, John Slater

Also present: Steve Bullock (Mayor), Barry Quirk (Chief Executive), Councillor Brenda Dacres, Joe Dunton

Apologies: Kath Nicholson, Councillors Kevin Bonovia, Suzannah Clarke, John Kennedy, Paul Upex

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made

2. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of 8 September 2016 be amended to include Councillor Dromey as in attendance for the Elections Committee meeting.

3. Proposals for Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries Report

The Chief Executive, Barry Quirk, and Joe Dunton presented the proposals for the Boundary Commission (see appendix), countering their initial proposal.

Councillor Paschoud outlined that the intention of this meeting was that Members would have a substantive discussion about the proposals at this meeting and if any outcomes need be discussed within the party groups then it can be if necessary; then a recommendation from this Committee would go to the full Council meeting in November where a full Council decision will be awaited and would then reach the Boundary Commission deadline in December.

Councillor Hall enquired about the response from the letter the Chief Executive had sent to the Boundary Commission pointing out that perhaps they should consider the numbers, and whether or not some of the regulations implied that these could be considered, as pointed out in the recent Minutes Barry Quirk discussed the initial letter to, and response from the Boundary Commission, stating that it was unsupportive.

He stated that, our argument was that they were fettering their discretion, one of our strongest points was that we had a significant demographic increase and also our increase in numbers of registered electorate (both in comparison

to other boroughs) and those are points we need to make again to reiterate. If the government wants a register that best reflects the residents in a borough, we would argue that principally our proposal is inclusive.

The CE went on to explain the boundary proposals presented on the maps, one being the existing parliamentary constituencies, the second being the BCE proposals which extends Lewisham West northerly and an extension into Greenwich West and the Peninsula; then thirdly, the counter-proposal, which swaps the three Southwark wards from the middle part of its borough to the more southern part.

Joe Dunton pointed out that the counter-proposal is based on better alignment with borough boundaries not on development.

In response to a question asked as to whether the universities in Greenwich and New Cross effected if at all, the CE responded that it is likely that students in both Greenwich and Lewisham boroughs will be greater than the students that are attending, due to lower rental values in comparison to central and East London, where other universities are located.

The Chair asked members if they had any further contributions and substantially different ideas to the one provided by the CE, to which everyone agreed that the counter-proposal should be submitted as it is. He also suggested that once the draft conclusion is reached in this meeting, Lewisham should make contact with at least the political leadership of neighbouring boroughs, Greenwich, Bromley and Southwark, to better support any knock-on effects that might occur as a result of the counter-proposal.

RESOLVED that the counter-proposals will be submitted to the full Council before going to the Boundary Commission, inclusive of the arguments made in the letter sent to the BCE.

The meeting finished at 7.34pm