Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13 July 2015 at 6.00 pm

Further to the recent despatch of agenda and papers for the above meeting, please find the following item(s) which were marked as 'to follow':

6. **KCC Boundary Review - Response to Consultation** (Pages 1 - 2)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

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Item 06 –KCC Boundary Review – Response to Consultation

The attached report was considered by the Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee, relevant minute extract below:

Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee - 2 July 2015 (Minute 6)

The Electoral Services Manager presented a report which advised that on 12 May the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had issued a consultation document on its draft proposals for new county council division boundaries for Kent County Council (KCC). The review was being conducted as KCC currently had high levels of electoral inequality where some councillors represented many more or many fewer voters than others.

The consultation period was due to end on 6 July (an eight-week period) which would not have allowed time for a formal response from this Council without special meetings of Governance Committee and Full Council being called. The Chief Executive had written to the LGBCE who had agreed to an extension to 22 July (the day after full Council on 21 July 2015) on the basis that a draft of what would be considered by Council on that date could be sent to them by 6 July, and notified on 22 July of any changes made at Council which could be achieved by the Portfolio Holder passing any comments agreed by the Committee.

Three alternative boundary options, which had been discussed prior to the meeting with the Portfolio Holder, were tabled along with the corresponding electorate numbers for each of the different proposals. Members considered and discussed these new alternative options along with alternative division name changes in detail.

One of the main concerns was keeping community identities for which alternative option three achieved this the best. It was generally felt that Sevenoaks Town should remain as one County Council division with Westerham remaining within Sevenoaks West division. Whilst creating a large geographic South division the configuration avoided the difficulty of one County Council member having to service two town councils, namely, Edenbridge and Westerham. With regards to the name changes, the guiding principle was to retain Sevenoaks as a generic name for all divisions bar Swanley and to distinguish between the divisions close to the Town and those which were purely rural. Sevenoaks West remained the same as it abutted the Town and being located all along the A25 up to and including Westerham town was not strictly rural.

It was noted that the report would be considered by the Governance Committee on 13 July and advised of the outcome of this Committee's considerations, and Full Council on 21 July 2015. The Chief Officer Legal and Governance would also be contacting all Members of the Council prior to the meeting of Full Council for any further comments, and Members of the Committee could also feed any further comments to her after the meeting.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democratic Services be advised that for the purposes of submitting the interim draft response to the consultation, the Advisory Committee's preferred option was the alternative option 3 tabled at the meeting (and attached as an appendix to these minutes), along with the alternative proposed division names also detailed on that map.