

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 3rd MARCH 2020

REPORT OF: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT TITLE: ELECTORAL REVIEW BRIEFING PAPER: PROGRESS UPDATE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on 3rd December 2019, the CRMG Scrutiny Committee received a report outlining details of the Boundary Commission's review of electoral arrangements in Stockport. The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the initial stage of the review.

1.2 The briefing includes: -

- A reminder of timescales for the review;
- An overview of progress towards collating the initial information required by the Commission, including: -
 - the forecasting methodology being used to predict the number of Electors for 2025;
 - Arrangements for the submission of housing development data;
 - The physical, digital and interactive maps produced for elected members;
- An initial draft Council size proposal for comment (Appendix 2).

2.0 Timescales

2.1 The key dates for Stockport's electoral review process are provided in the table below:

Dates	Activity
June 4 th 2020	Deadline for Council size proposal and information submissions to the Boundary Commission
July 28 th , 2020 – 5 th October 2020	Warding arrangements - Review formally commences, elected members and the public are asked for their views on new ward boundaries, the number of wards, names of wards, where the boundaries between wards should lie and the number of Councillors for each ward.
January 5 th – March 15 th 2021	Draft recommendations are published, second stage of consultation held
June 1 st 2021	Final recommendations are published
Summer – Autumn 2021	Passage of final recommendations through Parliament
May 2022	Revised electoral arrangements are implemented at an all-out election

3.0 Initial information submission to the Boundary Commission – progress update

- 3.1 Appendix 1 outlines a full list of the information required by the Commission.
- 3.2 The Council Size Proposal must be submitted to the Commission by the Local Authority but there may be more than one submission. The Commission will then decide on the most appropriate number of councillors to be elected to the Council by considering all submissions made. In making its decision, the Commission will consider the governance arrangements of the Council; the Council's scrutiny functions; the representational role of Councillors; and future trends and plans for the Council.
- 3.3 Group Leaders have previously agreed to submit a cross party submission, recommending that the number of councillors elected to the Council remains unchanged. The Council size submission emphasises that the current number of elected members reflects the increasing needs and complexity of the Borough.
- 3.4 An initial draft of the Council Size submission (using the Boundary Commission's template) has been produced for comments by Group Leaders and is appended to this briefing paper. Following consideration by this Committee, the draft Council Size Submission will be considered at the Group Leaders meeting scheduled for 17th March. The intention is for the Council Size submission to be discussed/approved at Full Council on 2nd April. Section 11 of the Council Size Submission, 'the Summary', has been left blank and will be completed following comments from Scrutiny and Group Leaders/Group representatives.

4. Electorate Forecasting Methodology

- 4.1 The Local Authority has adopted the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Polling District Forecasting Tool to predict the number of Electors for 2025. A copy of the populated forecasting tool, which is Excel based, will be provided to each political group.
- 4.2 The tool requires electoral data to be aggregated to polling districts for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019. A consequence of the polling review of 2018 which resulted in a new polling district in Offerton and other smaller changes is that the electoral registers for 2017 and 2018 do not have the same polling districts as the 2019 electoral register. To address and remove these discrepancies for use within the tool, it has been necessary to align the 2017 and 2018 electoral registers with the 2019 polling districts.
- 4.3 The tool automatically generates provisional polling district level forecasts based on both Office for National Statistics population forecasts and historical elector data. It also provides a mechanism for the Council to challenge the forecast for certain polling districts where we know there will be significant new housing developments.

5.0 Housing Development Data

- 5.1 The Boundary Commission requires details of the location of housing developments that have been included in the electoral forecast.

- 5.2 To help provide the housing development mapping data, the Council's Business Intelligence (BI) service has produced a data tool which will process data sources where there is strong intelligence that new housing developments will take place.
- 5.3 The Council is required by government to identify housing which will be delivered in the next 5 years, therefore in the context of assessing whether sites are likely to be delivered before 2025, the Council can have a strong degree of confidence that the sites identified in the existing 5-year housing supply position will be delivered.
- 5.4 However, Planning Policy are undertaking additional work to renew both the 5-year housing position and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment information to update the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF). This information will provide more certainty over the five-year land supply position and will have a base date of April 2020, therefore fully taking the model through to 2025. However, with the planned completion of the GMSF work in mid-May 2020, there is a risk that the GMSF data may not be available by the time the Council's information submission needs to be completed.
- 5.5 The BI service is able to run the data tool with the information that is currently available through the existing 5-year housing supply position and then run it again when the updated information prepared for GMSF is available.
- 5.6 The BI service will also feed projected housing developments for 2025 to 2030 into the model and will produce an additional Polling District Forecasting Tool for the number of Electors for 2030. Ongoing work in Stockport in relation to the GMSF draft trajectories suggests that most sites will not start to deliver any units until at least 2025, and therefore the bulk of the current proposed total (3,700) for those allocations will take place post-2025.

6.0 Maps Produced for Elected Members

- 6.1 A complete set of hard copy physical A1 maps for the 142 polling districts have been ordered for distribution by 21st February to each Group. PDF copies of the maps will also be provided. The maps show polling districts and ward boundaries where they are coterminous with the polling district.
- 6.2 A complete set hard copy of the area committee boundaries has been produced for each group.
- 6.3 There is also a [political boundaries map](#) online, showing the area committees, wards and polling districts and can be accessed by smart phone, tablet and PC. Parliamentary boundaries and polling stations can be switched on from the layer control. Electoral forecast numbers will be added when complete.
- 6.4 Additionally, an interactive digital map is being developed which will enable boundaries to be moved and show the consequent changes in the number of electors. Council officers will provide support for lead elected members in using this tool during arranged sessions and will also explore with members other ways that the BI service can support members. The digital map will also provide members with potential housing development intelligence.

7.0 Recommendations and Next Steps

7.1 Scrutiny Committee members are invited to:-

- Note the progress made so far
- Provide any comments on the draft Council Size Submission

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