

# Appendix 2

## COMMENTS OF CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY

### 16 February 2023

The Working Party met on 16 February 2023 and considered the revised warding arrangements and the potential alignments for area committee boundaries and made the following range of comments:-

- It was suggested that the current area committee arrangements worked well and the 'minimal change' approach identified at section 3.5 of the report seemed a sensible approach.
- There would be an opportunity for area committees to comment on their view of the existing arrangements within their area.
- The current number of area committees was appropriate.
- It was commented that the current area committee boundaries were an administrative arrangement that in some cases did not represent a defined community of interest. In this context, it would be appropriate to consider alternative clusters of wards that might more adequately serve this purpose than the aim of imperfectly aiming to align with communities.
- There was potential for greater alignment with other locality boundaries including the NHS and police.
- Any proposals for significant realignment would need to recognise any resource implications through, for example, an increase in the number of area committees.
- It was noted that there was a disparity in the size of area committees, ranging from 2 to 4 wards per area committee. It was suggested that there may be an opportunity to reduce this disparity through either merging some areas, such as the Marple and Werneth area or alternatively dividing the borough evenly into seven 3-ward area committees.
- Members representing the Cheadle Area Committee stated that they felt that it represented a cohesive and interrelated area, notwithstanding its size.
- There was the potential to give consideration to radically redesigning area committee boundaries and what area committees are designed to do.
- Area committees perform an important function and took decisions that affected the lives of residents.
- Consideration needed to be given to the need to retain certain wards as clusters within area committees because of the cross-boundary nature of the communities within them.

The Working Party then made the following recommendation:-

"That the Council Meeting be recommended to give approval to the adoption of the arrangement for area committees, as identified in Section 3.5 of the report, subject to an item being included within the Working's Party's work programme for 2023/24 to give further consideration to this matter, including scope for a possible radical realignment of area committee boundaries."

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### COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### **28 February 2023**

The Corporate, Resource Management & Governance Scrutiny Committee met on 28 February 2023 and made the following comments:-

- Concern was expressed about the new ward boundaries, for example residents of Heald Green are up to two miles from the location of the Area Committee and would need to cross a busy road to attend;
- Population sizes of wards had increased;
- Ward boundaries should be assimilated with partner organisations such as the local police and fire services in order to improve joint working; and
- Members were advised that the Area Committee Boundaries report would be submitted for consideration and comment at Area Committee meetings and thereafter – the Cabinet prior to a decision being made by the Council Meeting on 30 March 2023.

The Scrutiny Committee made no recommendation on the alignment of area committee boundaries.

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## COMMENTS OF AREA COMMITTEES

### Werneth Area – 6 March 2023

- It was noted that the proposals within the report represented a minimal change scenario for the 2023/24 municipal year, however a further review would take place to consider the potential for alternative locality models;
- The current boundaries for the Werneth Area Committee have served the local community well, allowing both local residents access to the Committee and members the opportunity to represent their community. The geography of Werneth area lends itself to the Area Committee retaining its current boundaries;
- Area Committees are a powerful way of keeping democracy in the local community by allowing decisions to be made close to the people that they affect;
- It was commented that the current boundaries of the Werneth Area Committee roughly aligned with the area of the former Bredbury & Romiley Urban District Council representing historical continuity of local decision-making and representation.
- Any radical changes to the boundary of Werneth Area Committee would be strongly opposed.

RESOLVED – That the Council Meeting be recommended to adopt the revised boundaries for area committees as detailed in Section 3.5 of the report.

### Cheadle Area – 7 March 2023

- The proposals for minimal change were logical and sensible.
- Maintaining an area committee of three wards was considered important.
- The Cheadle Area Committee was a cohesive and interrelated area that should remain, as closely as possible, as it currently was.
- Consideration needed to be given to the arrangements for the management of the Brookfield Park Shiers Family Trust.

RESOLVED – That the Council Meeting be recommended to adopt the revised boundaries for area committees as detailed in Section 3.5 of the report.

### Stepping Hill Area – 7 March 2023

- It was noted that there was an error in the map contained within the appendix as the Davenport & Cale Green ward was not named.
- It was commented that there was only a small change applicable to the Stepping Hill Area Committee boundaries.
- Members noted the relative size of the Area Committee boundaries and that some Area Committees encompassed two wards, and others four.
- It was commented that there had been discussions to review the function and composition which was welcomed.
- It was commented that whilst a review was welcomed, residents needed to relate to the area of community within the boundaries.

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- It was felt that there would be problems in relation to police coverage around the Norbury & Woodsmoor ward which were covered by different neighbourhood policing teams.
- In considering changes to Area Committee boundaries, it was requested that Cabinet take account of the potential for greater alignment with other boundaries including the NHS and police.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations contained within the report are endorsed.

### **Heatons & Reddish Area – 8 March 2023**

RESOLVED – That the recommendations contained within the report are endorsed.

### **Marple Area – 8 March 2023**

It was noted that a suggestion had previously been made that Marple and Werneth area committees could be amalgamated. It was stated that while this would represent an area committee that would be roughly commensurate in population to other four ward area committees in the borough, it would be geographically difficult to manage as it would include the three largest wards in the borough.

RESOLVED – That the Council Meeting be recommended to adopt the revised boundaries for area committees as detailed in Section 3.5 of the report.

### **Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South Area – 9 March 2023**

- It was noted that the current proposal was relatively minor, however there were discussions for a wider review in the next municipal year which was considered timely and a sensible approach.
- It was commented that the Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South Area Committee boundary was suitable for the area.
- It was commented that other boundaries including the NHS, police and neighbourhood areas should be taken into account when making decisions in relation to Area Committee boundaries.
- It was noted that the Area Committee boundaries had not been reviewed in a number of years.
- It was commented that Stockport was the first authority within Greater Manchester to establish a system of area governance with the aim to facilitate decision making at a more local level.
- It was felt that whilst the proposal did not have significant implications for Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme South Area Committee, it did for other Area Committee's and so welcomed individual consultation prior to a decision being taken.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations contained within the report are endorsed.

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### **Central Stockport Area – 9 March 2023**

It was commented that a significant amount of work had gone into developing the proposals and the thanks of the area committee was extended those involved.

RESOLVED – That the Council Meeting be recommended to adopt the revised boundaries for area committees as detailed in Section 3.5 of the report.