

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee held in the Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 8 March 2010.

PRESENT: Mr G K Gibbens (Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr M J Harrison, Mr J F London, Mr M V Snelling and Mr I S Chittenden (Substitute for Mr T Prater)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Wild (Director of Law and Governance), Mr G Adey (Head of Registration & Coroners) and Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Apologies and Substitutes

Mr Sass reported apologies from Mr Bullock, Mr Ferrin and Mr Prater. The Committee noted that Mr Chittenden was present as a substitute for Mr Prater.

2. Declarations of Interest on any items on this agenda

There were no declarations of interest made by Members in any item on the agenda.

3. Election of Vice Chairman

(Item 2)

Mr M J Harrison moved, Mr A R Chell seconded that Mr J F London be elected Vice Chairman.

Carried without a vote

4. Minutes - 2 November 2006

(Item 3)

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on 2 November 2006 and 25 June 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Review of KCC Election Arrangements

(Item 4)

The Committee considered a joint report from the Director of Law and Governance and the Head of Registration and Coroners on a review of KCC Election Arrangements.

During a debate the following comments were made by Members:

The cost and value of the election screen system was queried. Mr Wild stated that it would be up to this Committee in future to take a view on what facilities were needed on the day of a County Council Election count in 2013 and thereafter.

The Chairman stated that he had been assured that the Job Description for the new Group Managing Director included specific responsibility for performing the duties of the County Returning Officer in all County Council Elections.

Mr Adey confirmed that, for a County Council Election only, the timing of the count was down to the County Returning Officer (CRO), in consultation with the District Returning Officers (normally the Borough and District Council Chief Executives). The CRO had the power to issue a direction to the DROs, as he did for the 2009 County Council elections. However, if the County Council Election was combined with either a Parliamentary or European Election, either the Regional Returning Officer (for European Elections) or the Area Returning Officer (for Parliamentary Elections) could overrule the CRO on the timing of the count. Mr Adey added that the 2013 Elections would be County Council Elections only, unless there was an unscheduled Parliamentary Election. Mr Snelling stated that some of the District Leaders were not happy with the consultation process for the timing of the count for the 2009 County Council Elections.

After further discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: that:

- (1) the CRO makes a direction for a Friday morning count for all future KCC **joint** elections, and in order to give adequate notice this direction is made at least one year prior to the date of the election;
- (2) the proposed Scale of Fees for 2010 be reviewed by this Committee at a meeting in September 2010 and that it also assumes responsibility for authorising and approving the Scale of Fees each year thereafter;
- (3) this Committee agrees to consider and determine whether a fee should be payable in future to the CRO and, if so, whether any part of that fee should be apportioned amongst KCC election staff;
- (4) if joint KCC counts are proposed by DROs for any future KCC elections, these will be subject to the arrangements being agreed in advance by the CRO and respective DROs;
- (5) a post-election audit and reconciliation of district council expenses claims be undertaken through the Internal Audit offices of KCC;
- (6) succession planning arrangements are agreed by the Committee ahead of the retirement of the current Head of Registration & Coroners;
- (7) the Committee endorses and adopts the Election Protocol set out at **Appendix B** to the report, which sets out the procedures and arrangements for the conduct of KCC elections; and
- (8) the Minutes of this Committee meeting be referred to the County Council for information.

6. Two-Member Divisions

In response to a question from Mr Harrison, the Committee agreed to consider a report relating to two-Member Divisions, at its next meeting in September 2010.