

From: Graham Gibbens, Chairman of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee

Geoff Wild, Director of Governance and Law

To: Electoral and Boundary Review Committee

23 September 2013

Subject: **Swale Community Governance Review**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report informs the Committee of the Swale Community Governance Review and the current consultation which will close on 1 October 2013.

1. (1) KCC has been notified by the Leader of Swale Borough Council in accordance with Section 79 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, that Swale Borough Council intends to undertake a community governance review , focusing on the unparished areas of the Borough.

(2) As the principal authority, Swale Borough Council is responsible for undertaking a Community Governance Review in its electoral area. The full Council is responsible for overseeing this process and for agreeing draft and final recommendations before a Community Governance Order is made. This work will be undertaken through a working group of officers and councillors.

(3) Swale Borough Council resolved to commence this review on 19 June 2013. The review must be completed within one year of this decision.

(4) All new parish/town boundaries should be coterminous with Borough Boundaries. Where no parish currently exists the Borough Council is required to consider other forms of community governance as alternatives or stages towards establishing parish councils. These might include other arrangements for community representation or engagement in an area e.g. neighbourhood management forums, community forums or community associations.

(5) The Terms of reference for the review set out the detailed issues identified for the initial phase of the consultation, the following are the suggested matters at summary level for consultation:

- The establishment of a town council for Sheerness based on the borough ward boundary.
- The establishment of a parish council for Halfway based on the unparished area of the Queenborough and Halfway borough ward boundary.
- The establishment of a parish council for Kemsley based on the borough ward boundary.

- The establishment of a parish council for Milton Regis based on the borough ward boundary.
- The establishment of a parish council for the Meads based on the borough ward boundary.
- The establishment of a parish council for Murston based on the borough ward boundary.
- The establishment of a town council for Sittingbourne based on the borough ward boundaries for Chalkwell, Roman, Homewood and Woodstock (excluding the Tunstall urban parish ward).
- Increasing the size of Iwade Parish council.
- Any consequential amendments to parishes adjoining the current unparished areas in Sittingbourne, Milton and Kemsley.

(6) On 1 August 2013 Swale Borough Council commenced a consultation on the effectiveness of existing parish council arrangements and sought views on establishing new parish councils. A copy of the consultation information from the Borough Council's website is attached as **Appendix 1**. The Borough Council has informed local KCC Members of the consultation and given them an opportunity to submit their comments. This consultation runs until 1 October 2013. These views will be considered by the Borough Council in November 2013 and will help to shape firm proposals which will be the subject of a further consultation.

Recommendation: The Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to respond to the Swale Community Governance Consultation.

Background Documents

Swale Borough Council – Council agenda and minutes for 19 June 2013

<http://www2.swale.gov.uk/dso/viewagenda.asp?uid=1648>

<http://www2.swale.gov.uk/dso/viewminutes.asp?uid=1358>

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