

## Boundary Review

### Report to Plans & Policy Committee 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021

#### 1. Purpose

To outline the consultation on the Boundary Review being undertaken by the Boundary Commission and invite the views of members.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note the information from the Boundary Commission and that there is no proposal to change the number of councillors in Charnwood.
- 2.2. To consider whether the Council wants to make a similar representation that it did in June 2019 that Mountsorrel should not be warded into three sperate wards as it currently is, but be one ward for the whole village.
- 2.3. To consider:
  - a) Submitting proposals now to the Boundary Commission on any changes to the boundaries within Mountsorrel.

Or

- b) Wait until the Boundary Commission publish their draft proposals in August and comment on them then.

#### 3. Report

On 23rd March the Local Government Boundary Commission for England launched a public consultation inviting proposals for a new pattern of electoral wards for Charnwood.

The Commission is minded to recommend that 52 councillors should be elected to the council in future. We are now inviting proposals from the council, interested parties and members of the public on a pattern of electoral wards based on that number of councillors.

In drawing up a pattern of electoral wards, they must balance the three statutory criteria they are required to follow:

- Make sure that, within an authority, each councillor represents a similar number of electors
- Create boundaries that are appropriate, and reflect community ties and identities
- Deliver reviews informed by local needs, views and circumstances

The Boundary Commission will test proposals made against the criteria before drawing up their own proposals.

This means that proposals made should demonstrate how they meet the criteria. The Commission will take decisions based on the strength of the argument and not merely on assertion. For example, giving details of community interests such as the location and use made of local facilities, services and local organisations to support a proposal will carry greater weight than a proposal that simply asserts that an area has a community identity. The Commission has no power to create new parishes or alter the external boundaries of existing parishes. However, sometimes they may alter the parish wards used for parish (or town) council elections. This happens when they create new district or borough wards, or county divisions, for the authority they are reviewing which divide existing parishes. In that case, the law says they must change parish or town council wards so that they do not cross the new boundaries. When they do this, we may change the number of parish councillors each parish ward will have, but they would not normally change the total number of parish or town councillors. They consider all proposals on their merits. A well-evidenced proposal from an individual which addresses the three statutory criteria will be more persuasive than one which does not, even if the latter is from an elected individual or body.

They will carefully consider all views received during this phase of consultation, and plan to publish proposals for new electoral arrangements in August 2021.

- These will contain recommendations for the:
- Number of wards
- Number of Cllrs in each ward
- Ward boundaries
- Names of wards

#### **4. Previous Boundary Commission reports**

- 4.1. In 2016 the Commission made recommendations as part of a Leicestershire County Council review for the inclusion of Mountsorrel North End into the Quorn and Barrow division. The Parish Council made a late objection to this which was rejected.
- 4.2. In January 2017 Charnwood Council started a Community Governance review. At That time the Parish Council made a submission on the boundaries between it and Rothley. These are attached to the end of this report for information. It should be noted that the Commission have no power to alter the external boundary of the Parish during this Review.

#### **5. Timetable**

A public consultation inviting proposals will run from 23rd March 2021 to 31st May 2021.

Public consultation on the Commission's proposals is scheduled to take place between August 2021 and November 2021.

The Commission intend to publish final recommendations in February 2022.

New electoral arrangements for the borough are scheduled to come into effect at the borough council elections in 2023.

### **6. Parish Council**

- 6.1. After the Parish Council and Charnwood Borough elections in May 2019, the Parish Council was approached by many residents who expressed concern regarding the number of Wards within Mountsorrel as it caused both confusion and frustration for residents who had assumed that provided, they resided in the Parish they could vote in the elections. However, because the Parish contains 3 wards this was not necessarily the case.
- 6.2. The Council have previously held the view that Mountsorrel should not be warded and have endeavoured through various routes to try and have this matter discussed and, if possible, have the ward boundaries amended to reflect Mountsorrel as a single ward.
- 6.3. At the Parish Council meeting held on 17 June 2019 the Parish Council once again considered this matter and resolved that an approach should be made to once again try and get this matter resolved. We understand that the Borough Councillors for the Parish are supportive of such an approach.
- 6.4. The council may wish to reiterate its support for this position to the Boundary Commission.
- 6.5. At the moment there are no proposals on the table for the Council to comment on and it may wish to reserve its position until the second round of consultation in August when the Boundary Commission will produce draft proposals

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