

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2023

Councillors Present: Rick Jones (Chairman), Alan Law (Vice-Chairman), Adrian Abbs, Steve Ardagh-Walter, Phil Barnett, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Brooks, Jeremy Cottam, Carlyne Culver, Lee Dillon, Lynne Doherty, Billy Drummond, Clive Hooker, Owen Jeffery, Thomas Marino, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore, Biyi Oloko, Erik Pattenden, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart, Tony Vickers, Keith Woodhams and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Nigel Lynn (Chief Executive), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director for Resources), Paul Coe (Executive Director for People), Eric Owens (Interim Executive Director for Place). Sarah Clark (Service Director, Strategy and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager) and David Cook (Principle Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Jeff Beck, Councillor Jeff Cant, Councillor Hilary Cole, Councillor James Cole, Councillor Nassar Hunt, Councillor Gareth Hurley, Councillor Tony Linden, Councillor Alan Law, Councillor Royce Longton, Councillor Ross Mackinnon, Councillor Alan Macro, Councillor Graham Pask, Councillor Claire Rowles, Councillor Garth Simpson, Councillor Martha Vickers and Councillor Andrew Williamson

PART I

77. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Adrian Abbs, Tony Vickers, Billy Drummond and Phil Barnett declared an interest in Agenda Item 3, but reported that, as their interest was a personal or another registrable interest, but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, they determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

78. **Request for approval of the LGBCE consented Reorganisation Order for the governance arrangements for Greenham parish**

(Councillors Abbs, T Vickers, Drummond and Barnett declared a personal interest in Agenda item 3 by virtue of the fact that they were Greenham Parish Councillors. Councillor T Vickers was a Greenham Parish Councillor but his position would be abolished if this agenda item was approved. As their interests were personal and not prejudicial they were permitted to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 3) concerning the request for approval of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England consented Reorganisation Order for the governance arrangements for Greenham parish.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Marino and seconded by Councillor Vickers:

That the Council resolves to:

a) "Approve the draft *West Berkshire District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2022 (Appendix C)*, with specific reference to section 4 of the Order,

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as final, as consented to by the LGBCE in its letter to the Electoral Services manager, dated 24 November 2022 **Appendix D**;

For clarity, Section 4 of the Order states:

“(1) The existing wards of the parish of Greenham shall be abolished.

(2) The parish of Greenham shall again be divided into the two parish wards, which shall be named Common ward (polling districts GB1 + GB3) and Racecourse ward (polling district GB2), as listed in the first column of table 1 in Schedule 1 (Names of parish wards and number of Councillors).

(3) Each parish ward shall comprise the area designated on the map by reference to the name of the parish ward (as indicated on the map legend) and demarcated by the respective colours (Common ward in blue and Racecourse ward in yellow).

The polling district divisions, GB1, GB2 and GB3, (as indicated on the attached map) within the parish of Greenham shall remain unchanged.

(4) The number of Councillors to be elected for each parish ward is the number specified in relation to that ward in the second column of the relevant table 1 in Schedule 1. (Ten Councillors shall be elected for Common parish ward, and five Councillors shall be elected for Racecourse parish ward.)

(5) The alterations are contained within the boundary of the parish of Greenham, and do not affect any other parishes within the district.

(6) The alteration to incorporate Sandleford ward (polling district GB3), with only six (6) electors and five (5) parish Council seats (of which only one (1) is filled), into Common ward, with three thousand and twenty four (3024) electors and ten (10) parish Council seats, will ensure good governance across the whole of this area.

(7) The separation of the polling district GB2, with one thousand four hundred and seventy two (1472) electors, into a stand-alone ward, known as Racecourse ward, with five (5) parish Council seats, will improve governance for this area, and allow for the contrasting needs of this unique residential cohort.”;

b) Delegate authority to Service Lead – Legal & Democratic Services to exercise all relevant powers under the 2007 Act in relation to the CGR, and to seal the final approved Order to complete that Order and give it effect”.

Councillor Marino introduced the report and informed that there were currently two wards in Greenham Parish Council, however the Sandleford Ward only had 6 electors despite having five Parish Council seats. The report had been produced following a lot of work by officers and the Parish Council and proposed that the current wards be abolished and divided into new wards called Common and Racecourse.

Councillor Barnett said that the Parish of Greenham was originally a rural parish but due to the level of development over the years it was now a mixture of rural and urban sites with mixed tenure from large properties to many flats and apartments. The demographic had been changing with single occupancy through to large family homes.

One of the most recent developments was the Newbury Racecourse site that had completely changed the makeup of Greenham Parish with representation currently at about 1202 residents who had registered to have their say at a parish level. This was just the start and it would be increased in the future. The proposals before Council tonight would include the five nominated representatives within the Parish that had intended to be set aside for the Sandleford area. Some of the Racecourse residents at the moment could put their names forward to become Members of the old Greenham Parish but these proposals would also allow them to nominate five Members in the new

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ward if they wished so that the ward would get representation. He welcomed the proposals.

Councillor Vickers informed that it had been over ten years since he first thought that something needed to be done and this was when the Sandleford development had been formally approved. When he looked at the boundaries he saw that the Newbury and Greenham boundary ran straight through the middle of the proposed development. He felt that this was not right but if it was going to happen then someone needed to represent the Greenham part of the development. As it was in the Wash Common part of the Greenham Ward when he stood for election in 2019 he stood in the Greenham district seat and the Sandleford seat at a parish level. When it came to the election count for the Sandleford seat there had been no voters, four years later there were still no more voters so he felt that this was a good proposal.

Councillor Vickers did raise one concern that at the time of the district boundary review it was not permitted to have two parish wards in two different district wards and this was the reason for the anomaly of the five parish councillors. New development was coming forward such as Mayfield Court and thus he was sure that these proposals were the best outcome. He felt that there would still be a need to look at parish and town boundaries in the Newbury area and in other parts of the district in the future.

Councillor Vickers asked for three things to be corrected; in the minutes of the annual meeting when this issue first arose it said that he proposed it should be in one council area but this should say one district ward area, it also said that no one had been elected to the Sandleford ward but he had been albeit with zero votes and in schedule one column 5 the ward would have at least two hundred more electors by the next election.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

(The meeting commenced at 7.04 pm and closed at 7.18 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature