

To: Council  
28 September 2022

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**Request for Local Government Boundary Commission for England's consent to implementation of draft final recommendations of the Bracknell Forest Community Governance Review 2022**

**Executive Director: Delivery – Democratic and Registration Services**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report asks Council's approval to seek consent from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to the implementation of the draft final recommendations of the Boundary Review Working Group to conclude the Bracknell Forest Community Governance Review (CGR).
- 1.2 This special Council meeting has been convened as a result of the LGBCE shortening the timetable within which local authorities can request consent to implement changes made as part of the review process. The LGBCE must receive all requests by 30 September 2022 which is before the next scheduled full council meeting.

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **That the Council agrees to seek consent of the LGBCE to the Boundary Review Group's draft final recommendations as set out in Annexes A and B, including any required related alterations to borough ward boundaries.**

**3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 Consent must be sought from the LGBCE by the end of September 2022 to make any changes to areas where the Commission provided revised parish/town arrangements as a result of the 2020 borough boundary review.
- 3.2 Any 'related alterations' to borough warding arrangements to align with revised parish/town arrangements must also be submitted to the LGBCE by the end of November 2022.
- 3.3 Should the LGBCE, for any reason, not grant consent to any or all of the draft final recommendations contained within Annexes A and B, the arrangements put in place by LGBCE in 2020 will be reverted to as the default position for the areas impacted.

**4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 The working group considered various alternative proposals as part of their deliberations.

**5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 In accordance with the powers detailed in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Bracknell Forest Council has the authority to review

the governance arrangements of parish/town councils within the Bracknell Forest principal area and on 24 November 2021 the Council resolved to undertake a CGR of the whole of the borough of Bracknell Forest. This was in response to the LGBCE's review of Bracknell Forest Council in 2020 which saw changes to both borough and parish/town council warding arrangements.

- 5.2 Officers were delegated responsibility for conducting the review in consultation with the Boundary Review Working Group, including the drafting and publication of statutory review documentation, conducting two stages of public consultation, and drafting recommendations based on submissions received as part of this process.
- 5.3 While the 2007 act provides Bracknell Forest Council the power to make changes to governance arrangements of parish/town councils within the borough area, because it is still within the five-year period of the LGBCE implementing their changes to parish/town warding arrangements 'consent' must be sought from the LGBCE to make any changes to areas where they provided revised parish/ town arrangements.
- 5.5 Should the LGBCE, for any reason, not grant consent to any or all of the recommendations contained with the Annexe A then the arrangements put in place by LGBCE in 2020 will be reverted to as the default position for the areas impacted and revised final recommendations will be published before a Reorganisation Order is made, with the proposals that did not receive consent excluded.

## **6 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### Legal Advice

- 6.1 The statutory basis for conducting community governance reviews is set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Authority must also have regard to the contents of guidance published jointly by the Local Government Boundary Commission and the (then) Department for Communities and Local Government in 2010 when conducting such reviews.

### Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 The full range of responses received as part of the two stages of public consultation have been published on the Bracknell Forest Council website. Due consideration was given to these by the working group during the drafting of recommendations.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed at the commencement of the review and highlighted the need to ensure that, in the commissioning and running of the consultation, those with a disability or other accessibility consideration were afforded a range of options to engage with and respond to the review. As such both digital and hard copy versions of review documents were made available online, in borough libraries and at other community locations across Bracknell Forest.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 Failure to follow proper process for the implementation of a CGR could result in significant financial and reputational damage to Bracknell Forest Council.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO2 due to the nature of the exercise which is predominantly administrative using existing resources.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 None identified.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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