

To: Council
21 December 2022

Bracknell Forest Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2022

Executive Director: Delivery – Democratic and Registration Services

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This technical report asks Council to approve the Reorganisation of Community Governance Order and 'related alterations' request following the formal receipt of consent from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to enact the final recommendations of the Bracknell Forest Community Governance Review (CGR).
- 1.2 A subsequent request for 'related alterations' must be provided to the LGBCE before the end of the year to make minor changes to borough ward arrangements in time for the May 2023 elections, as identified in the review's final recommendations. This request must be accompanied by the corresponding Reorganisation of Community Governance Order. There is no scheduled Council meeting before the end of the year therefore this special meeting has been called.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Bracknell Forest Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2022 as set out in Annex A to this report is agreed**
- 2.2 **That a 'related alterations' request is submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for the borough boundary changes highlighted in yellow in Annexe A 1-6 of the Reorganisation Order.**

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 At the special Council meeting held on 28 September 2022, the final recommendations of the Boundary Review Working Group were agreed. The recommendations sought changes to the parish/town electoral arrangements and changes to borough warding arrangements to align with these changes.
- 3.2 To give effect to the final recommendations, consent was sought from the LGBCE for the changes to the parish/town arrangements to be made. Consent to all proposals was received on 29 November 2022. To conclude the review the Council must make a Bracknell Forest (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2022.
- 3.3 Once the Order is made requests for changes to any of the borough boundaries, known as 'related alterations' requests, must be provided to the LGBCE before the end of 2022, to align with the revised parish/town arrangements in time for the next ordinary council elections on Thursday 4 May 2023.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 This is a technical report asking Council to make the required Order and related alterations request, giving effect to the proposals agreed at the Council meeting on 28 September now that consent from the LGBCE to the changes to the parish/town

electoral arrangements has been received. This process is set out in legislation which the Council must follow to conclude the CGR.

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 The 2007 Act gives Bracknell Forest Council the power to make changes to governance arrangements of parish/town councils within the borough area, however, 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 At the special council meeting held on 28 September 2022 the final recommendations of the Boundary Review Working Group were approved and the request for consent to make these changes was submitted to the LGBCE on 29 September 2022.
- 5.6 Following the granting of consent by the LGBCE the final stage to implement the full recommendations of the review is for Council to approve the Reorganisation Order and submit the related alterations request to the LGBCE.

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

Ann Moore, Assistant Director: Democratic and Registration Services
Delivery Directorate - 01344 352260
Ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Philip Sadler, Electoral Services Manager
Delivery Directorate – 01344 352140
Philip.sadler@bracknell-forest.gov.uk