

BCFE (10) 2nd Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 3 February 2010, in the Boothroyd Room in Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 2HW

Present:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)
Joan Jones CBE
Professor Colin Mellors
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL
Jane Earl

Also present:

Alan Cogbill	Interim CEO LGBCE
Alison Wildig Review	Manager
Sam Hartley Review	Manager
Richard Buck Review	Manager
Jess Metheringham	Review Officer
Eleanor Gregory	Review Assistant

1. Opening remarks

1. apologies were given for the Director's absence.
2. the Chair requested that the final version of the minutes of the Committee's meeting of 7 December 2009 be circulated.

2. Minutes from Committee Meeting on 13 January 2010

1. the minutes were agreed subject to minor amendments to ensure accuracy and precision

3. Matters arising

1. the Committee discussed the ongoing recruitment for the LGBCE
2. the Committee discussed the structural reviews and the press reaction to the Committee's advice
3. the Chair apologised for the cancelled discussion on administrative boundary reviews that had been planned to follow that day's meeting

4. Declarations of Interest

1. there were no declarations of interest

5. Durham final recommendations –BCFE

Noted:

1. the Review Officer and Review Manager presented a report on the final recommendations for the Durham electoral review
2. the need for further consultation in some areas
3. that the alternative proposals should only be consulted on if they are valid, implementable schemes. Choices would stimulate debate and allow people to get involved in the process
4. that an argument had been made that the fluctuating numbers of university students in Durham City affect the projections for electoral equality. The Liberal Democrats had put forward a submission stating they felt the Council's projections are no longer valid and should be re-estimated. Officers were in the process of clarifying this issue with the council

6. the further consultation paper should be clear and detailed, focusing on the ripple effect of changes across the County. The paper should also take into account the responses from the public and include maps of the total area

7. that, in some instances council officers should be invited to tour the area with Committee members, for their involvement and knowledge of the local area

Agreed:

[REDACTED]

5. to undertake limited further consultation for the Chester-le-Street North area
6. to undertake limited further consultation for the Chester-le-Street South area but that one of the two options be the Committee's draft recommendations
7. to undertake limited further consultation for the City of Durham area and [REDACTED]
8. to undertake limited further consultation for the Framwellgate area to the north of the city of Durham
9. to undertake limited further consultation for the Great Aycliffe area offering the draft recommendations and the alternative proposal from the residents association for consultation
10. to undertake limited further consultation for the Shildon area offering the draft recommendations and the alternative proposal from Shildon parish council for a three-member division which would include Dean Valley.
11. to undertake limited further consultation for the area to the south and east of Durham City.
12. to undertake limited further consultation for the Crook and Tow Law area.

6. Council size overview: Sedgemoor, South Derbyshire, Northampton and West Somerset

Noted:

1. the Review Manager presented the paper on council size
2. the paper asked the Committee to consider if there was enough evidence to enable it to take a decision on the council size of the four reviews
3. the information provided by Sedgemoor and South Derbyshire was not wholly compatible with best practice and scrutiny, and needed to be re-assessed

Agreed:

1. that the Committee had sufficient evidence on which to make a decision on council size for Northampton and West Somerset
2. that meetings be set up between Committee members and group leaders in Sedgemoor and South Derbyshire to explore further the evidence for council size proposals in those two areas

7. Operational Report

1. Review Managers informed the Committee, on behalf of the Director, of the progress of the electoral reviews for Mansfield, Stoke, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire, Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East
2. the Chair updated the Committee of his recent meeting with group leaders at Milton Keynes concerning the authority's wish for an electoral review and external boundary review.

Agreed:

1. that the consideration and publication of the draft recommendations for Bedford and Central Bedfordshire be deferred. It was agreed that these reviews would now be considered at the 18 March Committee meeting and published in mid May.

8. Transfer Update

1. the LGBCE's Interim Chief Executive informed the Committee of the progress of the establishment of the LGBCE. An agreement with the preferred provider of accommodation and support services had yet to be finalised.

9. AOB

1. the Committee thanked and commended Alison Wildig, Review Manager, for her work over the last seven years and wished her well for the future.