

## BCFE (10) 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 18 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

Apologies: Jane Earl

Also present:

Alan Cogbill	Interim CEO LGBCE
Archie Gall	Director
Sam Hartley	Review Manager
Richard Buck	Review Manager
Paul Kingsley	Review Adviser
Tim Bowden	Review Officer
Kalim Anwer	Review Officer (minutes)

## **1. Minutes from Committee Meeting on 3 February 2010**

1. The minutes were agreed

## **2. Matters arising**

1. Administrative boundary review workshop to be rescheduled - paper to be circulated on the statutory provisions relating to such reviews.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

1. Joan Jones declared an interest in the review of Stoke-on-Trent and took no part in the discussion on that item

## **4. Stoke-on-Trent draft recommendations – BCFE(10)06**

Noted:

1. The review team had visited the Council in order to confirm correct electoral figures
2. Following consultation, the Committee had received 120 representations. The majority of the representations had been received from the Trentham and Meadow Lane area.
3. The Council had not agreed a proposal for electoral arrangements for submission to the Committee
4. The Council had conducted its own consultation and received approximately 170 representations, which it had forwarded to the Committee and had asked be taken into account
5. There are significant geographic features in Stoke which provide natural boundaries between different parts of the City, e.g. the A50, railway lines, etc
6. Bearing those geographical features in mind, the review team had examined council sizes of 44, 45 and 46 members, and had established that 44 members provided the best allocation of councillors across the City, and hence electoral equality
7. There was unlikely to be sufficient time in the review timetable to conduct any further limited consultation, unless the review's conclusion was pushed beyond the mid-October date for publication of final recommendations. However, the draft recommendations report could set out alternative options as a compromise

Agreed:

8. To confirm the draft recommendations as set out in table 2 to the paper, subject to the following changes:
  - i. Ward 36 should be replaced by a two-member ward and a single-member ward

9. Ward names should be circulated to Committee members the following week, agreed in correspondence and formally ratified at the Committee meeting on 18 March 2010
10. A paper to be drafted and circulated outlining the proposed consultation strategy.
11. No final decisions should be made at this time on the scope for any further limited consultations
12. That work be undertaken on re-establishing a 'knowledge bank' of particularly challenging review circumstance or judgements, for the Committee to refer to in such cases. This document would be a living document

## **5. Mansfield draft recommendations – BCFE(10)07**

Noted:

1. Consultation had been carried out on a council size of 36
2. In total, four submissions had been received (including the Council's)
3. The review team proposed adopting the Council's scheme subject to relatively minor modifications
4. In the west, the Council had proposed the Bull Farm & Abbott ward, which had a variance of 20%. Given this high level of electoral inequality, the Review Team put forward three options for the Committee's consideration

Agreed:

5. To confirm the draft recommendations as set out in table 2 to the paper, subject to the following change:
  - i. two single-member wards should be implemented for the proposed Bull Farm & Pleasley and Abbott areas. A detailed explanation should feature in the report outlining what the alternative option is i.e. implementing a multi-member ward

## **6. Operational Report – BCFE(10)08**

1. FERs:
  - i. Tours had been arranged for Northampton, South Derbyshire, Sedgemoor and West Somerset
  - ii. A meeting with South Derbyshire DC took place on 16 February. The Council had until Wednesday, 24 February to submit further evidence in support of their preferred council size
  - iii. A meeting had been scheduled with Sedgemoor DC. The Chair and a Committee member would be meeting with Group Leaders and members who sit on the electoral review working group
2. Structural reviews:
  - i. The Committee noted the Secretary of State's decisions on the advice it had submitted in relation to the reviews of Devon, Norfolk and Suffolk, and the decision by Norfolk and Devon

County Councils to initiate judicial review proceedings against the Secretary of State's

## **7. Transfer Update**

1. The LGBCE's Interim Chief Executive informed the Committee of the progress in the establishment of the LGBCE. He was currently awaiting the agreement to be signed with the preferred provider of accommodation and support services (agreement was signed later that day)
2. The Committee discussed the ongoing recruitment for the LGBCE
3. Governance documents will be available from March 2010
4. Order making process had yet to be resolved by DCLG
5. It was unlikely that the Deputy Chair and Commissioner appointments would be made before the General Election

## **8. AOB**

1. There were no AOB's