

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee



held on Monday, 14 August 2017 at 6.30 pm
in the Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Yvonne Constance (Chairman), Charlotte Dickson, Gervase Duffield and Ben Mabbett

Officers: Steven Corrigan and Matthew Gaskin

Number of members of the public: 5

6. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Edward Blagrove and Helen Pighills, who was substituted by Councillor Debby Hallett.

7. Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2016 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign them as such.

8. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests. Councillors Mabbett and Dickson both made statements that as members of Wantage Town Council they would not vote on any issue which could impact on the boundary of the town.

9. Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

10. Public participation

The list showing the members of the public who had registered to speak was tabled at the meeting.

11. Community Governance Reviews - draft recommendations

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic services on draft recommendations in respect of a number of community governance reviews and a revised timetable for the reviews.

CGR(C)24 – Amending the boundary of Wantage parish to include all the land at Stockham Farm, currently in Grove parish.

Councillors Mabbett and Dickson took part in the discussion but did not vote on this item.

The committee considered review CGR(C)24 to amend the boundary of Wantage parish to include all the land at Stockham Farm, currently in the Grove parish.

Bill Falkenau, Clerk to Wantage Town Council, spoke against the recommendation outlined in CGR(C)24 to extend the boundary of Wantage parish at Stockham Farm to only include the land south-east of the old Berks and Wiltshire Canal. His points included the following:

- The proposed boundary line along the canal is an unsuitable boundary;
- Downsview Road is a more appropriate boundary as it would provide a distinct boundary between the parishes of Wantage and Grove.

The committee considered a letter from Councillor St John Dickson objecting to the proposals. The key arguments included the following:

- The utilities companies already consider the land north-west of the canal at the Stockham development as part of Wantage, not Grove.
- Downsview Road acts as a suitable parish boundary; the land at Stockham Farm north-west of the (disused) canal would be the only area outside of this boundary in Grove.
- The development houses residents who use Wantage as their main centre for recreational use, so in terms of community cohesion it makes sense to keep this land in Wantage.

It was noted that the whole of the land under review is included in the Wantage Neighbourhood Plan area.

The committee did not support the proposal in the schedule to only transfer the area of land south-east of the old Berks and Wiltshire Canal to Wantage parish. Downsview Road provided a more defined boundary between Grove and Wantage parishes: Stockham Farm is one community which identifies with and uses the facilities in Wantage and with the development of Grove Airfield a green buffer will exist between Downsview Road and the expanded settlement of Grove.

The committee supported the inclusion of the land north-west (as well as south-east as per the officer's recommendation) of the canal which would therefore include the entire Stockham development in the Wantage parish.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to amend the boundary of Wantage parish to include all the land at Stockham Farm currently in Grove parish.

CGR(D)24 – Amending the boundary of Wantage parish to include land at Crab Hill, currently in both Grove and Lockinge parishes.

The committee considered CGR(D)24 to include the land at Crab Hill in the Wantage parish, currently in Grove and Lockinge parishes.

Councillors Mabbett and Dickson took part in the discussion but did not vote on this item.

The committee accepted the officer's recommendation to extend the boundary of the Wantage parish at Crab Hill (to include land currently in both Grove and Lockinge parishes).

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to:

1. amend the boundary of Wantage parish at Crab Hill to include land currently in both Grove and Lockinge parishes,
2. include these areas of land in the Wantage Charlton ward of Wantage Town Council,
3. remove the Crab Hill ward of Grove Parish Council and;
4. make no change to the size of Grove Parish Council.

CGR(B)21 – Amending the boundary of Radley parish to include Chandlings Manor School currently in Kennington parish or amending the boundary of Sunningwell parish to include land to the west of the Oxford Road currently in Kennington and Radley parishes (subject to Local Government Boundary Commission consent)

The committee considered CGR(B)21 on a proposal to either amend the boundary of Radley parish to include Chandlings Manor School currently in Kennington parish or to amend the boundary of Sunningwell parish to include land west of Oxford Road currently in Kennington and Radley parishes (subject to Local Government Boundary Commission consent). Two further submissions had been received from South Hinksey Parish council and Sunningwell Parish Council which proposed additional changes to the parish boundaries.

Colin Weyer, Vice-Chairman of Sunningwell Parish Council, addressed committee in support of the proposals set out in the letter from Sunningwell Parish Council dated 24 January 2017 and in support of the recommendation to amend the boundary of Sunningwell parish to include land to the west of Oxford road currently in Kennington and Radley parishes.

Christine Chater, of South Hinksey Parish Council, addressed the committee in support of the parish council's proposal to transfer a parcel of land at the top of Hinksey Hill which includes The Westwood Hotel from Kennington parish to South Hinksey parish.

The committee agreed that proposals from Sunningwell Parish Council to transfer properties from Wootton parish to Sunningwell parish in Boars Hill around Lincombe Lane and to transfer that part of Sunningwell parish South of the A34 to Abingdon

parish would be the subject of future community governance reviews as they do not closely relate to the area covered by the current review.

The committee agreed that the old Oxford Road would provide a well-defined man made boundary to replace the existing obscure line via woods and fields.

The committee also agreed to consult relevant parish councils and affected residents on the following proposals:

- A proposal from South Hinksey Parish Council to transfer a parcel of land at the top of Hinksey Hill which includes The Westwood Hotel from Kennington parish to South Hinksey parish.
- A proposal from Sunningwell Parish council to transfer Chilswell Farm Cottages off Foxcombe Road to Sunningwell parish from Cumnor parish on the grounds that the properties are remote and separated from any other community but have a close attachment with BoarsHill/Sunningwell parish.
- A proposal from Sunningwell Parish Council to transfer 14 houses on the north side of Hinksey Hill up to and including the property known as Brunswick (recently renamed Wishem House) to Sunningwell parish from South Hinksey parish on the grounds that the properties are part of the Boars Hill community and relate to Boars Hill/Sunningwell parish rather than South Hinksey.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to extend the boundary of Sunningwell parish to include land to the west of Oxford Road currently in Kennington and Radley parishes and to consult on the proposals from South Hinksey and Sunningwell parish councils detailed above.

CGR(G) – To increase the number of councillors (currently five) and to review the warding arrangements for South Hinksey Parish Council

The committee considered CGR(G) on whether to increase the number of councillors (currently five) and to review the warding arrangements for South Hinksey Parish Council.

Christine Chater, of South Hinksey Parish Council, addressed the committee in support of the proposal to increase the number of parish councillors to address the workload for existing councillors and to create two parish wards with equal representation: The Village and the Hinksey Hill area.

The committee supported an increase in the number of councillors at South Hinksey Parish Council from five to six and to ward the parish.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to increase the size of South Hinksey Parish Council from five to six parish councillors and to ward the parish along the A34 with the wards of Village and Hinksey Hill each electing three councillors.

CGR(A)13 – Amending the boundary of Grove parish to include Grove Technology Park, currently in East Challow parish (subject to Local Government Boundary Commission consent)

The committee considered CGR(A)13 on whether to amend the boundary of Grove parish to include Grove Technology Park, currently in East Challow parish (subject to Local Government Boundary Commission consent).

It was argued that currently, it is assumed that Grove Technology Park is in the parish of Grove considering it is named as such and that the access being along Downsview Road begins in the Grove parish. In terms of community cohesion, it should be placed officially in Grove.

However, the view was also expressed that the current boundary along Downsview Road provided a logical boundary and that in reality, it would have very little impact on either Grove or East Challow parish if it was moved.

The committee supported the maintenance of the boundary as it currently is keeping Grove Technology Park in East Challow.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal not to amend the boundary of Grove parish to include Grove Technology Park (currently in East Challow).

CGR(E) – Removal of the current warding arrangements for Longworth Parish Council currently comprising east and west wards

The committee considered CGR(E) to remove the current warding arrangements for Longworth Parish Council currently comprising east and west wards.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to remove the current warding arrangements for Longworth Parish Council currently comprising east and west wards.

CGR(F) – To increase the number of councillors at East Hanney Parish Council (currently six)

The committee considered CGR(F) to increase the number of councillors at East Hanney Parish Council from six to eight in light of a request from the parish council because of housing development and village expansion.

It was noted that if agreed, the increase would not come into effect until 2019.

RESOLVED: to consult on a draft proposal to increase the number of councillors at East Hanney Parish Council from six to eight.

Review timetable

In light of the delay to the current reviews the committee agreed an amended consultation deadline of Monday 16 October with the committee agreeing the final proposals at a further meeting in November.

RESOLVED: to agree the revised timetable set out in paragraph 9 of the report of the head of legal and democratic services to the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee on 14 August 2017.

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm