



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12TH JULY, 2018

REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS BY THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For Members to begin their review of the Council's Electoral Arrangements in accordance with Section 29 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act, 2013, following the referral from Council on the 27th June, 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree key terms of reference for the Working Group acknowledging that community boundaries will be used as the building blocks for the review;
- 2.2 To instruct Officers to develop options and appropriate feedback mechanisms in accordance with the principles set out in the report to Council on the 27th June, 2018.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Members will recall that at the last Council Meeting held on the 27th June, 2018, consideration was given to the urgent report in respect of the Review of Electoral Arrangements by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. It was resolved at that meeting that in accordance with Minute No.139 of the Council Meeting held on the 25th April, 2018 that commentary upon a review of electoral arrangements include a Working Group comprising all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an invitation being extended to all Members. A copy of the said report together with enclosures is attached at Appendix A.

3.2 The review of Electoral Arrangements for a principal area will include consideration of:-

- The number of Members for that principal area
- The number, type and boundaries of Electoral Wards
- The number of Members for any Electoral Ward in the principal area.
- The name of any Electoral Ward.

3.3 The principles of the review will be a consideration of:-

- Electoral parity
- The number of Councillors remaining at 75
- To discourage multi member wards beyond a maximum of 3
- Natural boundaries to be used as far as possible
- Ward boundaries should not be revised unless absolutely necessary (N.B. it is a Boundary Commission instruction that there should be no small boundary changes)
- Each ward should have one name which should be bilingual

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

4.1 Members are asked to consider the following key terms of reference:-

1. To acknowledge the use of Community Boundary Wards as the essential building blocks for the review.
2. To keep change to a minimum.
3. To acknowledge that some Electoral Wards will need to be amended in some formal way within the parameters outlined in the guidance.
4. To instruct Officers to develop options based on these principles.
5. To instruct Officers to develop appropriate feedback mechanisms with the timetable set out below.

5. TIMETABLE

- 25th July, 2018 – presentation to full Council by the Boundary Commission for Wales.
- August, 2018 – Consider options and proposals in accordance with the principles outlined above.
- Early September, 2018 – special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirming the preferred option.
- October, 2018 – Council to receive feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommend preferred option to the Commissioner (deadline 23rd October, 2018)

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The provisions of the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act, 2013.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 A full equality and diversity assessment is not required at this time. This position will be re-evaluated on an ongoing basis as related actions are delivered.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

