

Community Governance Review – Romsey Town

Report of the Democracy and Governance Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

1. That the Terms of Reference for a Community Governance Review covering Romsey and Romsey Extra parishes, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be approved.
2. That a Member Panel of seven Members be established to consider representations received as part of the Community Governance Review, with membership to be nominated by Group Leaders.

SUMMARY:

- This report follows full Council's decision on 1 September 2021 to agree to undertake a Community Governance Review (CGR) of the boundaries of Romsey Town, following a request from Romsey Town Council to extend the existing boundaries, so that the new boundary is coterminous with the existing Borough Ward boundaries.
- The next stage in the CGR process is to approve Terms of Reference for the Review. Draft terms are attached at Annex 1 to the report, and set out details of the background, the process to be followed, consultation arrangements, and timetable.
- The report also proposes the appointment of a Member Panel to review any representations that are received, and assist in the preparation of reports to full Council on draft and final recommendations, as part of the CGR process.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At its last meeting on 1 September 2021, Council decided to undertake a Community Governance Review of Romsey and Romsey Extra parishes, in response to Romsey Town Council's resolution to request a review of its boundaries, so as Romsey Town's area will include the full extent of the three Romsey Borough Wards.
- 1.2 This report proposed draft Terms of Reference for the Review, and also proposes the appointment of a Member Panel to assist in the CGR process.

2 Background

- 2.1 Members are referred to the previous report for the full detailed background to this matter, which is summarised in the draft Terms of Reference at Annex 1 to the report.

3 Terms of Reference

- 3.1 A key requirement of the process, which formally starts the Review, is the adoption of Terms of Reference for the Review. These set out the background to the CGR, the process to be followed in undertaking it, consultation arrangements, and timescales.
- 3.2 A draft set of Terms of Reference is attached as Annex 1 to the report. These are based on the terms of reference that were successfully used for the 2018 CGR.
- 3.3 Members are accordingly asked to approve the Terms of Reference.

4 Proposed Member Panel

- 4.1 For the 2018 CGR, the Council appointed a Member Panel, which considered the representations received. The deliberations of the Panel fed into the reports to Council on the draft and final recommendations for the CGR.
- 4.2 It is recommended that a similar approach is taken for this CGR. A Panel of seven Members would be a suitable size, and the suggested representation on the Panel would be 4 Conservative, 2 Liberal Democrat, and 1 Andover Independents.
- 4.3 It is suggested that nominations to the Panel are made by Group Leaders. Officers will then liaise with those selected, to arrange meeting dates, etc.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 The approach suggested in this report will minimise the risk of legal challenge, and ensure a sound approach to the CGR process.

6 Resource Implications

- 6.1 As noted in the previous report, the primary resource required would be officer time in undertaking the consultation process, analysing the responses and assisting the Member Panel to formulate recommendations as a result.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 It is a legal requirement for terms of reference to be adopted, in order to carry out a CGR.

8 Equality Issues

- 8.1 There are no identified equality issues arising from the subject matter of the report.

9 Other Issues

Wards/Communities Affected.

- 9.1 The Borough Wards of Romsey Abbey, Romsey Cupernham and Romsey Tadburn are affected by this report. If a CGR were to be agreed and the request from Romsey Town Council endorsed, Blackwater and Chilworth, Nursling and Rownhams Wards would also be affected. The Parishes of Romsey Extra, Wellow, Nursling and Rownhams, and Michelmersh would also be affected by any CGR undertaken.

10 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 10.1 The proposed approach follows that successfully used in 2018.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u> Formal request from Romsey Town Council to Chief Executive 16 July 2020.			
<u>Confidentiality</u> It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	1	File Ref:	N/A
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Report to:	Council	Date:	10 November 2021