

CORPORATE SUPPORT COMMITTEE – 19 January 2023

AGENDA ITEM 5 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

1. From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Corporate Support Committee, Councillor Paul Dendle

FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW

Note, the Chair will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution;
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the Chair or other appropriate Members of the Committee
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question.
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Corporate Support Committee, Councillor Paul Dendle

The Boundary Commission examining Constituency boundaries has made a proposal which would remove Bersted and other parts of the current Bognor Regis and Littlehampton Constituency into a Chichester Constituency. Does the Chairman agree this is a wholly nonsensical proposal which fails to recognise the distinct characteristics of the urban area of Bognor Regis parishes hindering cohesive approaches to local issues, and will the Council be making its views known/has it done so?

Response

Thank you for your question, Mr Cosgrove. I can confirm that a written answer will be provided for this question. In terms of my opinion on the questions I don't think it is necessary as my opinion doesn't have bearing on the ultimate decisions. So, I don't have an opinion on it at the moment.

Written Response

For decades now, Parliamentary and District boundaries have not aligned. More recently there has been even less scope for local authority boundaries and 'communities' to be a factor for the Boundary Commission when deciding upon Parliamentary constituencies, with electorate and population numbers being the principle consideration. The Council recognises that elements of the District wards to the west would become part of a new Chichester County Constituency, much as other areas of the district form part of other constituencies during a parliamentary election.

The Council did respond to the Boundary Commission's earlier version of its proposals and was largely supportive of them, acknowledging that the Commission is having to balance considerable growth within communities. The Council acknowledged the largely even division between the larger population centres within the District. This remains the case under the revised proposals. The Council recognises that any division of its district communities will be unwelcome, but the ultimate decision is largely out of the Council's hands and as I have explained Commission's focus is upon electorate and population numbers and so some element of removal of the district wards into adjacent constituencies will almost always be the result of boundary reviews.