

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Friday 18th August 2006

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room **C*

MEMBERS: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

Councillors Hall, Henery, Iseley, J Marshall, Rogan, Shaw, Wallace, Wistow and Young.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 31st July 2006 (attached)
- 4. ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**
 - 4.1 Review of Parish Electoral Arrangements – Chief Solicitor
- 5. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**
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GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

31st July 2006

Present:

Councillor: D Young (In the Chair)

Councillors: Hall, Henery and Shaw

Officers: John Collings, Assistant Director (Performance and Achievement)
Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

9. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors J Marshall and Wistow.

10. Declarations of interest by members

None

11. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 31st July 2006

Confirmed

12. Appointment of Local Authority Representatives to Serve on School Governing Bodies *(Director of Children's Services)*

Purpose of report

To update Members in respect of vacancies that currently exist and of those which will exist in August 2006 for Local Authority representative governors, and to request Members to make a recommendation to the Children's Services Portfolio Holder, in respect of the appointment of a Local Authority Representative Governor to serve on a school governing body where a vacancy currently exists.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

Members were advised that applications are invited from members of the general public, elected members and those governors whose term of office is about to expire and who are, interested in serving or wish to continue to serve as a LA representative governor on school governing bodies.

The following criteria had been agreed by the Borough Council for the recruitment of LA representative governors in 2000. LA governors should be able to show:

- demonstrable interest in and commitment to education;
- a desire to support the school concerned;
- a commitment to attend regular meetings of the governing body (and committees as appropriate) and school functions generally;
- good communication/interpersonal skills;
- ability to work as part of a team;
- a clearly expressed willingness to participate in the governor training programme.

A schedule was attached as Appendix A to the report setting out details of vacancies which currently exist for LA representative governors and those vacancies occurring in August 2006, together with an application received in respect of one of the vacancies. Appendix B contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to any individual (para 1)

Decision

That the following recommendation for the appointment of an LEA Representative Governor be referred to the Children's Services Portfolio Holder, be approved.

Ward Jackson Primary School

Councillor J J F Brash

DAVID YOUNG

CHAIRMAN

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

18th AUGUST 2006



Report of: Chief Solicitor

Subject: REVIEW OF PARISH ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To comply with the resolution of Council that this matter be referred back to the Committee

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee have previously conducted a review of parish electoral arrangements. At their meeting on 14th November 2005, the Committee concluded that the 2 wards of Headland Parish Council should be replaced by one ward, but that otherwise the current arrangements throughout the parishes should remain. At their meeting on 14th March 2006, the Committee concluded that the Headland Parish Council should retain thirteen Councillors as at present.
- 2.2 At the meeting of Council on 13th April 2006, upon presentation of the report of the Committee, reference was made by members to issues relating to the Committee's decision upon another matter within the Committee's remit, namely recharge of parish election expenses, which they considered needed to be resolved before the electoral arrangements were finalised. Council resolved that the recommendations of the Committee on the Parish Electoral Arrangements be referred back to the Committee.
- 2.3 The issue relating to recharge of parish election expenses was referred to the Portfolio holder for Performance Management, who, on 24th July 2006, determined that parish election costs should be recovered by the Council.
- 2.4 To assist Members a copy of the report to Council on 13th April 2006 is attached (Appendix 1)

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 That the Committee consider whether any change to their earlier recommendations is necessary, as required by Council. However, the Chief Solicitor is not aware of any matter which would necessitate or justify alteration to the views of the Committee as earlier concluded

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Committee restate their earlier recommendations.

5. CONTACT OFFICER

Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor.

COUNCIL

13th April 2006



Report of: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Subject: REVIEW OF PARISH ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to invite the Council to conclude the review of electoral arrangements in the parishes in the Council's area.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At the meeting of the Council on 23rd September 2004 –

- i) The General Purposes Committee was directed to consider the Headland Parish Council's request, to reduce the number of wards in the parish from 2 to 1 and.
- ii) The Committee was authorised to direct that a review of electoral arrangements in the Parishes take place as, as it considers appropriate, and to take all such action in this regard as the law permits.

2.2 At their meeting on 3rd November 2004, the General Purposes Committee approved the review of the electoral arrangements for Headland, Hart, Elwick and Dalton Piercy Parish Council, together with consideration of arrangements with regard also to the Parish meetings of Brierton, Claxton and Newton Bewley, and other action relevant to the review.

2.3 The first stage consultation commenced in January 2005; there was circulated a consultation paper which described:-

- the purpose and nature of the review;
 - the statutory background;
 - the review process;
 - the current electoral arrangements in the parishes;
 - the options open to the borough council, and
 - the issues relevant to the review
- and invited views on the issues raised.

- 2.4 The consultation paper was circulated direct to:-
- the parish councils themselves;
 - local councillors – both borough and parish councillors;
 - schools, Housing Hartlepool housing offices and libraries located in the parishes;
 - relevant Single Regeneration Boards and
 - the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Hartlepool
 - chairs of borough council neighbourhood forums.
- 2.5 A small number of responses (approx 40) was received. The main body of responses was received from residents of Headland Parish where clearly the parish council had been active in encouraging response by local people. All but one of those responses were for the parish not to be warded with only one response in support of retention of the 2 wards. Apart from the responses addressing the Headland Parish arrangements, responses were received from other parishes and parish meetings to the effect that there should be no changes made.
- 2.6 The results of the consultation were considered by the General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 15th June 2005, following which a document setting out the Council's proposals was circulated for consultation at stage 2 (Appendix 1). The proposals were that there was to be no change to the electoral arrangements in any parish.
- 2.7 The results of the second stage of consultation were considered by the General Purposes Committee at their meeting on 14th November 2006. At that meeting, the committee heard from the Chairman of the Headland Parish Council, who spoke in support of the earlier resolution of the Headland Parish Council to seek the dewarding of the parish. The Parish Chairman considered that the two ward system had never seemed to work. The issue had been raised at a number of public meetings arranged by the parish council in the past. The full parish area was smaller than the Borough Council Ward and it was considered that there was no reason for the divisiveness of two parish wards. The Parish Chairman requested that the views of the Parish Council and the people of the parish be acknowledged by the borough council and the two parish wards be amalgamated into one.
- 2.8 Members of the Committee acknowledged the high level of public involvement in the Headland Parish Council. In light of the comments put forward on behalf of the Parish Council by their Chairman and the reported public responses to the consultation, the Committee supported the proposal that the Headland Parish Council be a one-ward Parish Council. The committee resolved - That the 'Review of the Electoral Arrangements for Parish Councils – Draft Proposals – August 2005' be approved for submission to Council subject to an amendment to the proposals for Headland Parish Council to reflect that Council's wish that the parish be one ward as opposed to the present situation of two wards. Appendix 1 sets out the proposals, duly

amended (see para 5.1 deletions and italicised inserts) in accordance with the Committee's wishes.

- 2.9 At their meeting on 14th March 2006, the General Purposes Committee accepted the Headland Parish Council submission that the number of members on the parish council should remain at the current number of 13. It was resolved –That Members approve a recommendation to Council that the Parish Council consist of 13 members.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council accept the Committee's recommendations to the following effect -

1. the current arrangement of division of the Headland Parish into wards shall be terminated, with the current number of 13 councillors being elected to the parish council; and
2. there shall be no change to the electoral arrangements in the other parished areas.

Appendix – Proposals document (amended)