

Report To: Council

Date of Meeting: 12 April 2016

Lead Member / Officer: Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

Report Author: Democratic Services Manager

Title: Boundary Review between the Prestatyn Central and Meliden Wards

1. What is the report about?

A review of the ward boundary between the Prestatyn Central and Meliden wards.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

This review was undertaken in response to a formal request from Prestatyn Town Council for a review of the boundary between the Central and Meliden wards and to review an historic anomaly in the warding arrangements.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council approves an:

- (i) Amendment to the ward boundary between Prestatyn Central ward and Meliden ward to include the properties on Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive as illustrated on the map in Appendix 1; and
- (ii) That the Central and Meliden electoral wards for the Town Council and the County Council be amended in accordance with the boundary shown in Appendix 1.

4. Report details

Background to the Review

In response to a formal request from the Town Council for a review of the boundary between the Central and Meliden wards, Denbighshire County Council has undertaken a review of the boundary in accordance with the provisions in the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013.

This review comprised of a preliminary consultation which ran from the 5 June 2015 to the 14 August 2015 involving the Town Council, county councillors, regional and constituency Assembly members, the member of Parliament for the Vale of Clwyd, the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, the North Wales Police

and Crime Commissioner and a public consultation through the Council's public website.

A second consultation on draft proposals was held between the 30 October 2015 and the 11 December 2015 with the previous consultees and residents of Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive who would be affected by the draft proposals.

The responses received to the consultation are shown in Appendix 2 and 3. The draft proposals consulted upon form the recommendations being made to Council today but also incorporate an amendment suggested by the Boundary Commission on the grounds that it would be easily identifiable, maintain the changes proposed in the draft consultation and fit in with the Council's Local Development Plan (as shown in Appendix 4).

The Existing Boundary

The current warding arrangements for the Community of Prestatyn are derived from the Rhuddlan Communities Order 1982 but it became evident that the register of electors previously did not reflect the boundary shown (see Appendix 1) with Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive having been included in Central ward on the register.

The inclusion of those streets in Central ward on the register first appeared in 1986/1987 indicating that a review of the ward boundary had been undertaken by the Borough of Rhuddlan. However, no record of the review or boundary amendment order to the 1982 Order has been found and in light of this the correct boundary is currently that specified in the 1982 Order. The register of electors for the area was amended in March 2014 to accord with the Order.

The current boundary is therefore anomalous in terms of dividing both Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive into two separate wards whilst the road networks lead only to Central ward. There is a delineation between the development boundaries for Prestatyn and Meliden with green barrier and open space land between them and with the two roads located entirely in the Prestatyn development boundary.

The responses received to the review suggest that the residents of Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive would prefer to be located within Central Ward, Prestatyn. It was also the Town Council's preference and would resolve the anomaly between the 1982 Order and the subsequent attempt from 1986/1987 to provide the residents with practical warding arrangements, and for these reasons, Council is recommended to amend the ward boundaries for those two roads to be entirely within the Central Ward.

Meliden Road and The Paddock

A suggestion was made during the consultations to include properties on Meliden Road and the Paddock within Central ward and an informal survey undertaken by the

proposers with some of the residents appears to show a majority of the residents questioned in favour of being included within the Central Ward too. This change does not form part of the recommended boundary change at this time.

The reasons for this are that the Town Council itself was not in favour of making changes to the boundary line other than to the anomalous areas on Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive. The Meliden Road/Paddock properties are directly connected to Meliden (their existing ward) by the A547, unlike Bishopswood Road and Cambrian Drive where the road network runs through Central Ward first for some distance before reaching Meliden ward.

Amending the boundaries on Meliden Road and at the Paddock would not regulate an historic anomaly or error on the electoral registers whilst the consultation also returned a view regarding the historic importance of Meliden, a very old settlement, and the avoidance of further erosion of Meliden's boundaries. The Local Government (Wales) Bill proposes that the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales will review the communities within the new counties to be established in April 2020; allowing for a comprehensive review of the whole community of Prestatyn to take place.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

No direct contribution to the Corporate Priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no significant costs arising from these recommendations.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report

These recommendations are not proposing a new policy or changes to services though the recommended changes to the warding arrangements would make highway routes to a polling station for some electors more convenient and accessible.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Consultations have been undertaken in accordance with statutory provisions.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no obvious cost implications as a result of this change.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The Council has a statutory duty to maintain warding arrangements that are desirable in the interests of effective and convenient local government and the existing anomalous situation in Cambrian Drive and Bishopswood Road are unsatisfactory.

11. Power to make the Decision

Sections 31 and 33 of the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013.

Section 39(5) of the 2013 Act requires the Council to seek the consent from Welsh Ministers before an Order is made to change the ward boundaries.

Once final proposals have been agreed by Council a public notice will be published and consent requested from Welsh Ministers, prior to the Order being made.