

DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE**6 September 2017**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes**Proposal to change the name of Barming Ward**

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Barming Ward

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To agree to a consultation exercise for changing the name of Barming Ward to become Barming and Teston Ward.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy Committee	6 September 2017

Proposal to change the name of Barming Ward

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Democracy Committee is asked to agree to a consultation exercise being undertaken to change the name of Barming ward to Barming and Teston ward following the request of the Ward Councillor, Councillor Mrs Gooch.
 - 1.2 The report sets out a proposed timetable and process for the name change.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Councillor Mrs Gooch approached the Council requesting that the name of Barming ward be changed to more accurately reflect the two parishes the ward covers. This follows feedback from residents in the ward and the parish council of Teston.
 - 2.2 It is therefore proposed to put forward a change of ward name to Barming and Teston for consultation. The proposed name change recognises that Teston is within the ward.
 - 2.3 By law, a local authority may not pass a resolution to change the name of a ward unless it has taken reasonable steps to consult with persons that it considers appropriate on the proposed name.
 - 2.4 Following the consultation to change the name a further report will be brought back to this committee with the results. If the Committee agrees a recommendation will be made to council to agree the proposed name change.
 - 2.5 Any resolution to agree the proposed ward name change must be passed at a specially convened Council meeting, where two thirds of members voting need to support the proposal for it to pass.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether or not to consult with the residents of the Barming Ward on the name change. A timetable for consultation and next steps is set out in section 6 of the report.
 - 3.2 The Committee could review the attached timetable report and information and decide not to carry out consultation and therefore stop the process of changing the ward name.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether to start the process of changing the name of Barming Ward to Barming and Teston Ward with formal consultation on the proposal.

4.2 The local ward Councillor, Councillor Mrs Gooch has put forward the proposal following feedback from residents and Teston Parish Council:

"The parish of Teston is one of two parishes that make up the ward of Barming. Teston is a well-defined rural village of about 300 homes with its village shop and village hall which lie together in the centre of the village which is a conservation area. Teston lies to the west of Barming Ward.

The other parish is Barming and is semi-rural. It lies on the western edge of the Maidstone urban area, comprising approx. 720 homes. Its boundary with the adjoining wards of Heath and Fant (neither of which is parished) runs up the middle of one of its estates: the Beverley Estate. It is not uncommon for residents in those adjoining wards to mistakenly believe they live within the parish of Barming.

The two settlements of Barming and Teston are separated by almost 1.5 miles of open countryside. They are both very distinct and separate communities.

Hence Members are asked to approve a request to change the name of the ward from 'Barming' to 'Barming and Teston'. This will add clarity and will enable a more accurate reflection of the make-up of the electoral area i.e. that the ward comprises the two distinct parishes of Barming and of Teston.

There are other wards within the borough that already carry the identity of its parishes, such as Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton; also Sutton Valance and Langley.

Members are asked to note that no boundary change is involved. This is purely a request to amend the title of the ward. The added value of the amendment will be three-fold:

- 1. To accurately reflect the electoral make-up of the ward i.e. two distinct and separate communities;*
- 2. To foster the identity of Teston and inclusivity of its residents, being just as much a distinctive part of the ward as the residents of the parish of Barming.*
- 3. To illustrate to residents in neighbouring communities such as St Andrews and Fant that they are not electorally in Barming (even though estate agents and Royal Mail like to think they are) thus helping to reduce confusion."*

4.3 Section 59 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables a Local Authority to agree to change the names of any of its electoral areas (normally known as wards) by passing a resolution at a Special Meeting of the full Council held for that purpose, subject to the statutory procedure being followed. The Act specifies steps that must be taken by an Authority in order to change the name which are summarised as follows:

- a. Before passing a resolution at a Special Meeting to change the name of an electoral area the authority must take all reasonable steps to consult such persons as it considers appropriate on the proposed name.
- b. A resolution to change the name must be passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of members voting at a specially convened Council meeting.
- c. Notice of the object of the meeting must be given.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 If the Committee approve consultation this will be via a survey drop to every household in the ward with a return envelope. Costs are estimated to be £1,000 with officer time to collate the results.
- 5.2 A notice will also go in the local press and on the parish noticeboards and on the Council noticeboard.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Timetable

September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Notice, press release, item for website and letter to residents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise delivery
01/10/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Notice – on Website and public noticeboards in the ward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue press release
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation letter and reply envelope to be distributed to all residents of Barming Ward
31/10/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing Date for comments
15/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democracy Committee
29/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Council

30/11/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform LGBCE, the Boundary Commission, the Office of National Statistics and the Director General of the Ordnance Survey if name change agreed
1/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish revised register
2/12/2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email Democratic Services and Councillors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Election Management Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Press Release
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish notices in public places (Council Buildings etc)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Digital and GIS to update Internet, maps etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Democratic Services Web Pages on Modern.gov

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities		Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	No risks identified	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	It is estimated that the cost of the consultation required for the name change will be £1,000. This will be met from within existing budgets.	S151 Officer and Finance Team
Staffing	Some officer time will be required to collate the survey results.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	Legal implications are set out in the report	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Environmental/Sustainable	Not applicable	Head of Policy,

Development		Communications and Governance
Community Safety	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Human Rights Act	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Asset Management	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None