

COUNCIL MEETING – 19TH APRIL 2012

Extract from the Minutes of the Constitution Committee Meeting on 22nd March 2012

54 CREWE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee following the outcome of the Stage 1 consultation with a view to advising Council on the formulation of its draft recommendation.

The Committee had before it the papers considered by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 13th March 2012. These comprised:

- a briefing paper based on the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government which set out the process to be followed in conducting the Community Governance Review and the matters to be taken into consideration by the Council in formulating a draft recommendation;
- the outcome of the ballot of local electors held in February; and
- other representations received from the public and stakeholders during the first round of consultation.

The initial phase of consultation had included written representations received in response to public notices, specific invitations, a website tool and information leaflets. Two public meetings had been held in September to give members of the public the opportunity to learn more about the review and to express their views in a public forum. Further opportunities had subsequently been provided to provide information at various community events during November and December 2011. The Council's website had also been used as a source of information and as a tool for people to use to record their views. Finally, a voting paper had been sent to electors in Crewe to be returned by 29th February.

The ballot of local electors had taken place throughout the month of February 2012 and the result showed 10,810 electors in favour of a single town council for Crewe and 1,390 against. The vote represented a 32% turnout and the Sub-Committee was satisfied that this was sufficient to represent the views of the electors of Crewe. Other public and stakeholder responses made during the Stage 1 consultation also showed a clear preference for a single town council.

The Sub-Committee had also considered the electoral and warding arrangements for the parish council, including the numbers and disposition of wards, number of parish councillors, date of elections and transitional arrangements, details of which were set out in the minutes of the Sub-Committee's meeting.

The Sub-Committee had recommended as follows:

“That the Constitution Committee be advised that pursuant to Section 87 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; and having regard to the provisions of the Department for Communities and Local Government and Electoral Commission Guidance, issued in April 2008, for the conduct of Community Governance Reviews:

1. Having taken into account

- a. the results of the consultation with the electors of the unparished area of Crewe which shows that a majority of those who returned their ballot papers were in favour of a new parish council for their area;
- b. the results of the consultation exercise with stakeholders and the representations from other interested persons;
- c. the outcomes of the public meetings held in Crewe and subsequent publicity and consultation arrangements; and
- d. the information on existing community governance arrangements in the area concerned and the alternative forms of community governance which might have been appropriate for the area in question;

2. Council be advised

- a. that the interests of effective and convenient local government and community identities in the area would be served by the creation of a new parish with a parish council for the unparished area of Crewe and that parish council be advised to consider its designation as a Town Council;
- b. that the parish should be divided into 6 wards for the purposes of election to the Parish Council, such wards to be coterminous with the existing Borough wards except that the unparished part of Leighton (Polling District 3FJ5) be incorporated into the St Barnabas parish ward, and that each ward should have the same number of parish councillors as Borough Councillors as follows:

St Barnabas (inc part of Leighton)	1
Crewe Central	1
Crewe North	1
Crewe South	2
Crewe East	3
Crewe West	2
TOTAL	10

- c. that the first year of elections to the new parish council should be 2015;
- d. that in the intervening period, as soon as the community review governance process allows, a temporary parish council be

appointed by the Borough Council, to comprise the members of the Crewe Local Service Delivery Committee; and

- e. that these proposals form the basis of a second stage of public consultations and that the Boundary Commission be informed of these proposals.”

In noting the advice of the Sub-Committee, the Committee considered a number of issues:

1. whether the electors of the unparished part of Leighton should be asked if they wished to be included in the proposed parish of Crewe or in the existing parish of Leighton;
2. whether the proposed number of 10 parish councillors for Crewe was sufficient for a town of that size, given that a number of smaller towns in Cheshire East, such as Nantwich, Congleton, Alsager and Wilmslow, had a larger number of town councillors; and
3. whether it was appropriate to delay parish elections until 2015 and to appoint a temporary parish council when elections could be held in May 2013.

RESOLVED

That pursuant to Section 87 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; and having regard to the provisions of the Department for Communities and Local Government and Electoral Commission Guidance, issued in April 2008, for the conduct of Community Governance Reviews:

1. the Committee having taken into account
 - a. the results of the consultation with the electors of the unparished area of Crewe which shows that a majority of those who returned their ballot papers were in favour of a new parish council for their area;
 - b. the results of the consultation exercise with stakeholders and the representations from other interested persons;
 - c. the outcomes of the public meetings held in Crewe and subsequent publicity and consultation arrangements;
 - d. the information on existing community governance arrangements in the area concerned and the alternative forms of community governance which might have been appropriate for the area in question; and
 - e. the advice of the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee;

2. Council be advised

- a. that the interests of effective and convenient local government and community identities in the area would be served by the creation of a new parish with a parish council for the unparished area of Crewe and that parish council be advised to consider its designation as a Town Council;
- b. that the parish should be divided into 6 wards for the purposes of election to the Parish Council, such wards to be coterminous with the existing Borough wards except that, subject to recommendation c. below, the unparished part of Leighton (Polling District 3FJ5) be incorporated into the St Barnabas parish ward, and that each ward should have the number of parish councillors as follows:

St Barnabas	2
Crewe Central	2
Crewe North	2
Crewe South	3
Crewe East	4
Crewe West	3
TOTAL	16

- c. that the electors of the unparished part of the Borough ward of Leighton should be asked whether they would prefer to be included within the proposed parish of Crewe or within the existing parish of Leighton;
- d. that elections to the Crewe parish council should be held as soon as is practicably possible, thereafter to be synchronised with the ordinary date of parish council elections; and
- e. that these proposals form the basis of a second stage of public consultation and that the Boundary Commission be informed of the proposals.