

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Community Governance Review Sub-Committee

Date of Meeting:	27 th April 2012
Report of:	Borough Solicitor
Subject/Title:	Crewe Community Governance Review – Preparation for Stage 2 Consultation

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This paper deals with the next stage of the Crewe Community Governance Review, namely the arrangements for the Stage 2 consultation. Council at its meeting on 19th April 2012 will consider the recommendations of the Constitution Committee on the Draft Recommendation on the review and Council's decision will be reported at the meeting.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee consider the arrangements for the Stage 2 consultation in the light of the decision of Council on the Draft Recommendation.

3. The Review Process

- 3.1 To remind the Sub-Committee, the key stages of the community governance review process are set out below:
- (1) Determine viable options for community governance in the area under review.
 - (2) Draw up a Consultation Plan focused on consulting on those viable options.
 - (3) Stage 1 Consultation on the options.
 - (4) Evaluation and analysis of responses.
 - (5) Draft recommendation for the Constitution Committee to consider for recommendation to Council.
 - (6) Draft Proposal advertised
 - (7) Stage 2 Consultation on the Draft Proposal
 - (8) Council decides Outcome of the review.
- 3.2 The review has now reached stages (6) and (7) in which the Draft Recommendation approved by Council will be advertised and a second round of consultation will be undertaken.

- 3.3 The timetable for the review process is set out in the project plan attached at **Appendix 1**. The project plan timetable has been updated since the previous meeting, and Members are asked to note and endorse the revised timetable.

3 Outcome of the Stage 1 Consultation

- 3.1 The Sub-Committee considered the outcome of the Stage 1 consultation at its last meeting.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 had been 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 had also showed a clear preference for a single town council.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 Having considered the outcome of the Stage 1 consultation, including the Ballot result, and having considered alternative forms of community governance arrangements, the Sub-Committee had recommended the Constitution Committee to advise Council that
- 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.”

3.6 In noting the advice of the Sub-Committee, the Constitution Committee had 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.

3.7 Having considered these issues and the advice of the Sub-Committee, the Committee recommended to Council

- 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, and should thereafter 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.

3.8 The decision of Council will be reported at the meeting.

4 Stage 2 Consultation

- 4.1 The Sub-Committee now needs to consider the arrangements for the Stage 2 consultation in the light of Council's decision on the draft recommendation.
- 4.2 The first step will be the publication of a Notice on 30th April 2012. The Notice will set out the Council's draft recommendation and invite comments which may be submitted in writing to the Registration Service and Business Manager, by email or through the Council's website. The Notice will be published in a prominent local newspaper and on the Council's website, and copies will be displayed in appropriate public buildings in the Crewe area and at Westfields. Copies will also be sent to the consultees and stakeholders consulted during the Stage 1 consultation. Electors and stakeholders will then have a three week period, commencing 11th May 2012, in which to submit comments on the draft recommendation. A draft Notice will be prepared for consideration at the Sub-Committee's meeting.

- 4.3 A further meeting of the Sub-Committee will be convened to consider the outcome of the Stage 2 consultation and to make a final recommendation to the Constitution Committee.

Officer Contact Details

Name: Paul Mountford
Designation: Democratic Services Officer
Tel No: 01270 686472
Email: paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk