

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Governance Review Member Group**
held on Thursday, 12th November, 2009 at East Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillors D Cannon, R Cartlidge, H Davenport, A Kolker and R West

25 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Tony Ranfield had recently resigned as Chairman of the Governance and Constitution Committee and Crewe Community Governance Review Member Group (referred to herein as the Sub Committee). He had been replaced on both bodies by Councillor Harold Davenport, who had been appointed Chairman of the Governance and Constitution Committee. Accordingly, Members were invited to nominate a Chairman for the Sub Committee.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Harold Davenport be elected Chairman of the Sub Committee.

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence had been received on this occasion.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cannon declared a personal interest in the proceedings by virtue of his position as a Crewe Charter Trustee and; in making his declaration he gave the following point of explanation. Although the standing of the Charter Trustees would come to an end should new governance arrangements be approved for Crewe; until such time the Trustees would continue in their role. Whilst both scenarios affected him personally, he did not consider that this justified declaring a prejudicial interest.

Councillor Cartlidge declared a personal interest in the proceedings by virtue of his position as a Crewe Charter Trustee on the same grounds as stated by Councillor Cannon.

28 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

In accordance with Procedure Rules No. 11 and 35, a total period of 10 minutes was allocated for members of the public to address the Sub Committee on any matter relevant to its work.

Mr Steve Hogben, who had been present at the Sub Committee's meeting on 5th October 2009 spoke to the meeting, stated that comments he had made concerning his interest in the outcome of the consultation process had been omitted from the Minutes.

29 MINUTES

Subject to the addition of Mr Hogben in the list of speakers at the meeting -

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2009 be approved as a correct record.

30 STAGE 2 CONSULTATION

At its meeting on 15th October 2009, Council had considered the results of the first stage of the consultation process and had resolved to "*accept the vote from the people of Crewe and to reject the notion of a town council for Crewe at the current time*".

Cheshire East Council was now required to i) publish the decision as the Council's draft recommendation for the outcome of the review; and ii) take steps to ensure that all interested parties were informed. The Sub Committee was invited to approve the content of three documents; a consultation paper publicising the Council's decision; a press release inviting the public to participate in Stage 2 consultation process and a public notice describing the position to date; all of which would, as appropriate, be placed on deposit at Council information points, sent to consultees and made available on the Council's website.

Stage 2 consultation was originally due to commence in October 2009 but, as the documents would need to be 'signed off' by the Sub Committee prior to publication, the timeframe had been revised and would now run between November 2009 - January 2010. As the Boundary Committee's consultation period was due to conclude before Council met to consider its decision on 25 February 2010, the Sub Committee was advised that there may be a need to hold meetings of the Sub Committee, Governance and Constitution Committee and Council earlier than scheduled.

Comment was made that some organisations had indicated that they had not received any communication from the Council as part of Stage 1 consultation. Members were invited to speak to officers outside of the meeting to update the distribution list for Stage 2 of the consultation.

30.1 Draft Recommendation Consultation Document

The outcome of the first consultation period was set out on page 7 of the agenda. A Member proposed that the number of individuals who had abstained from responding to question 1 but had answered question 2 should be included in the document, which was supported.

Having been moved and seconded, the amendment was then put to the vote. Two voted for the motion, three voted against the motion and there were no abstentions. Accordingly, the amendment to the motion was lost.

The Chairman then moved that the draft recommendation as printed on the agenda be approved. Having been moved and seconded, the motion was put to the vote. Three voted for the motion, two voted against the motion and there were no abstentions. Accordingly, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED: That the content of the draft Recommendation Consultation Document arising from the first phase of consultation be approved as printed on the agenda.

(Note: Councillors Cannon and Cartlidge voted against the motion which has been recorded in accordance with Procedure Rule 31.4)

30.2 Draft Press Release

The Sub Committee was invited to approve a draft press release, subject to the substitution of the quotation in the body of the text from Councillor Davenport in place of Councillor Kolker.

RESOLVED: That subject to the substitution of quotations as described above, the draft press release as set out in the agenda be approved.

30.3 Public Notice

Members were advised of two typographical errors within the public notice which required correction prior to publication i.e.

Third paragraph second line. The sentence beginning “A public meeting was..” to be replaced by “Public meetings were...”

Fourth Paragraph, second line. The word ‘of’ to be replaced by ‘from’.

To ensure that maximum publicity was given to the Stage 2 Consultation, a request was made for the notice to be included in the next issue of Cheshire East News, publication dates permitting.

RESOLVED: That subject to the amendments listed above, the public notice be approved.

30.4 Boundary Committee

To ensure that the Boundary Committee was advised of the position in respect of Crewe Community Governance Review, it was proposed that a copy of the consultation document be sent to it.

RESOLVED: That Cheshire East Council write to the Boundary Committee, enclosing a copy of the consultation document.

31 UPDATED PROJECT PLAN

The Project Plan submitted to the Sub Committee for consideration assumed that Stage 2 consultation would run between 30 November 2009 to 8 January 2010; with responses reported to Governance and Constitution Committee on 28 January 2010, its recommendations being considered by Council on 25 February 2010.

This timeline currently fell outside the Boundary Committee's next public consultation period in respect of the Cheshire East Electoral Review (which was due to end on 31 January 2010), and Members were advised that a special meeting of Council could be required before the end of January to agree the authority's response to the Boundary Committee. In this case, the special Council meeting could also be used to consider the outcome of the Crewe Community Governance Review. Therefore it was possible that meetings of the Sub Committee, Governance and Constitution and full Council would need to be held in the week commencing 25 January 2010.

At this point in the meeting, a Member referred to a telephone canvass which had been undertaken by a third party during Stage 1 Consultation. He suggested that Cheshire East Council should carry out a similar survey as part of Stage 2 but this was not deemed appropriate at this stage in the process. However, in response to questions raised, it was confirmed that there would be no objection to a third party commissioning a survey, provided the responses obtained could be submitted to the Council for consideration within the agreed timeframe for the review.

The Sub Committee was invited to note the changes proposed which were set out in the revised project plan.

RESOLVED: That the revised project plan be noted.

32 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the date of the next meeting would be dependent on the need to meet the deadlines set by the Boundary Committee and would, therefore, be communicated to the Sub Committee in due course

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm and concluded at 3.50 pm

Councillor Harold Davenport