

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub-Committee
held on Thursday, 15th April, 2010 at Oakencrough Children's Centre,
Colshaw Drive, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 2PZ

PRESENT

Councillor J Crockatt (Chairman)
Councillor P Whiteley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors G Barton, R Cartlidge, D Stockton and D Cannon (for Cllr Jones)

In attendance

Councillor R Menlove

Officers

Lindsey Parton, Elections and Registration Team Manager
Mike Flynn, Review Team Officer
Paul Mountford, Legal and Democratic Services

Apologies

Councillor S Jones

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

17 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Mr Steve Dempsey of the Styal Village Association expressed his strong support for a parish council for Styal. In this respect, he felt that the use of the term 'town council' for all options for community governance in the unparished areas of Wilmslow, Handforth and Styal was inappropriate and potentially misleading and that the appropriate term for use in relation to Styal was 'parish', which reflected the wording used in the Styal petition.

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2010 be approved as a correct record.

19 BRIEFING PAPER - WILMSLOW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT

Members considered a briefing paper on a number of issues relating to the Community Governance Review.

(1) Terminology to be used in Documentation and Publicity about the Review

The Sub-Committee at the last meeting had decided that to avoid confusion to the public it would prefer to refer to the term “town council” in all documentation published about the review. The intention was to try to avoid reference to several different terms, such as “parish council”, “community council” and “town council”.

Members were invited to reconsider their decision on the matter in light of the actual wording of the three petitions received. All three petitions had referred generically to the constitution of a new ‘parish’. Each petition then went on to propose a different title for the body concerned, namely ‘community council’ for Handforth, ‘town council’ for Wilmslow and Handforth, and ‘parish council’ for Styal.

The legislation relating to Community Governance reviews (Section 87 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) specified that the principal council must make recommendations as to what new parish, or parishes (if any) should be constituted; must make recommendations as to the name of the new parish; must make recommendations as to whether or not the new parish should have a parish council; and whether or not the new parish should have one of the alternative styles.

Under section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972, a parish could be given the status of a town. “Town” status continued to be available to a parish. In addition, the 2007 Act offered a further choice of styles: community, neighbourhood and village. Where a community governance review related to a new parish, it was for the principal council in the first instance to make recommendations as to the name of the parish, taking account of the views and preferences of people living in the area.

Given this background, Members acknowledged that the use of the term ‘town council’ only at this early stage could be confusing to those people who had signed the Handforth and Styal petitions, which did not refer to a town council.

RESOLVED

That the term ‘parish Council’ be adopted as the sole generic term to be used in all documentation associated with the Community Governance Review. An explanation of the term be included in all publicity and

consultation documentation, together with a description of all the possible styles of term which could emerge from the review.

(2) Public Meetings

Members noted that it had not been possible to confirm Honford Hall as the venue for the public meeting on 28th April. Arrangements had now been made for the meeting to be held at Handforth Youth and Community Centre, Old Road, Wilmslow. The public notice had been amended accordingly and would appear in the press during week commencing 12th April to provide two weeks' notice of the public meetings.

It was proposed that each of the public meetings begin with a preamble, outlining the nature of the Review and the issues to be decided, followed by a public question and answer session.

RESOLVED

That

- (1) the change of venue for the meeting on 28th April be noted; and
- (2) the text of the preamble for the meetings be forwarded to Members of the Sub-Committee before the meetings are held.

(3) List of consultees

The list of consultees had been updated and extended following discussions at the last meeting and a revised copy had been circulated to Members for information.

Members commented that the Sub-Committee which had conducted the Crewe Community Governance Review had not been aware of which consultees had responded to the public consultation. The Elections and Registration Manager confirmed that for the Wilmslow Review a full list of respondents would be reported to the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED

That the revised list of consultees be confirmed.

(4) Explanatory Leaflet

The text for the explanatory leaflet had been updated and a map added. Members were asked to agree the final content and format of the leaflet for printing, and to decide whether a black and white or coloured map should be included.

RESOLVED

That

- (1) a coloured map be included in the explanatory leaflet, subject to appropriate colour coding being used to delineate clearly the different areas covered by the three petitions, and subject to the inclusion of a blue line to indicate the course of the River Dean; and
- (2) the text of the leaflet be agreed subject to the following amendments:
 1. the replacement of all references to 'town council' with 'parish council';
 2. the inclusion of an explanatory note to the effect that the term 'parish' can include a town;
 3. the three petitions be mentioned separately in the opening paragraph;
 4. the phrase 'the unparished parts of' be deleted from the second paragraph; and
 5. the table of precepts be amended by:
 - (a) reordering the towns in alphabetical order;
 - (b) amending 'Chorley' to 'Chorley (Alderley Edge)'; and
 - (c) changing the heading of the third column to 'precept per household'

(5) Draft Ballot paper to Electors

The Sub-Committee had agreed that as part of the Stage 1 consultation, a voting paper with an explanatory leaflet would be sent to all electors. Members were asked to consider and agree the format and wording of the ballot paper.

[Note: at this stage, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned for ten minutes to enable Members and Officers to consider detailed proposals for the design of the ballot papers. The meeting was then reconvened to consider formally the options proposed.]

It was proposed that for clarity and to enable the response from each area to be identified separately, there would be three separate ballot papers, corresponding with the areas covered by the three petitions and asking those questions appropriate to each area.

The Elections and Registration Manager clarified that the old boundary between Wilmslow and Handforth, as defined in the Handforth Petition, would determine which residents would have a vote on the Handforth proposal.

RESOLVED

That three separate ballot papers be produced, one for each of the areas covered by the three petitions, to include the following questions:

Handforth

1. *Do you want a parish council? (yes/no)*
2. *Tick the option you agree with:*
 - a. *I want a single parish council for Handforth, Wilmslow and Styal;*
or
 - b. *I want a separate parish council for Handforth.*

Styal

1. *Do you want a parish council? (yes/no)*
2. *Tick the option you agree with:*
 - a. *I want a single parish council for Handforth, Wilmslow and Styal;*
or
 - b. *I want a separate parish council for Styal.*

Wilmslow

Do you want a parish council for Wilmslow, Handforth and Styal? (yes/no)

(6) Publicity for the start of the Review

Members considered revised drafts of the notice and press release to be issued at the end of April which incorporated changes agreed at the previous meeting.

RESOLVED

That the draft notice and press release be agreed subject to the amendment of the third paragraph in each case as follows:

replace 'should by now have received' with 'will shortly receive'.

(7) Next Stages

Arrangements would now be made for the printing of the voting papers and explanatory leaflets, which it was proposed would be dispatched to electors on 7th May. The stage 1 consultation period would then take place from 10th May to 4th June. Copies of the leaflet would also be printed and made available for the three public meetings on 26th, 28th and 29th April. At the beginning of May, all consultees identified would be contacted and a copy of the explanatory leaflet sent to them, inviting their views.

RESOLVED

That the next stages of the Review be noted.

20 NEXT MEETING

To be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 3.30 pm

Councillor J Crockatt (Chairman)