

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Constitution Committee**
held on Monday, 12th July, 2010 in the East Committee Room - Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor P Findlow (Chairman)
Councillor D Brickhill (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors D Cannon, R Cartlidge, A Moran, R Parker and P Whiteley

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence, due to Council Business, were received from Councillors C Beard, D Topping and R West; apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Asquith and S Jones.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

12 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak or ask a question.

13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Constitution Committee held on 24 June 2010 be approved as a correct record.

14 WILMSLOW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - PARISH AND WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee met to consider the recommendations of the Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub Committee with a view to making recommendations to Council on the number of Councillors to serve on each of the new Parish Councils, and the ward names, boundaries and number of Councillors for each ward in the Wilmslow Parish.

Detailed background information was provided to the Committee in the form of the reports considered by the Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub Committee at its meetings on 24 June and 5 July 2010; the minutes of the latter meeting contained the detailed recommendations of the Sub Committee to this Committee and these also had been previously circulated.

Members were informed that, as part of its considerations, the Sub Committee had included comparator information on the size of Parish Councils in order to

assist in determining the appropriate number of Parish Councillors for each of the three Parishes, and options for the warding of the proposed Wilmslow Parish.

The comparator information listed a number of comparable towns and Parishes throughout Cheshire East and gave electorate totals, electorate ratio per Councillor and number of wards in respect of each. Two options for the warding of Wilmslow were considered; Option 1 was based on the five traditional wards of the former Macclesfield Borough Council and, using a ratio of approximately 1,250 electors to one Councillor, the number of Councillors for each ward had been determined.

It was noted that the warding arrangements had been complicated by the fact that there was an ongoing Boundary Review with the final recommendations of the Boundary Commission due to be announced the following day (13th July 2010). An electoral changes Order would then need to be laid in draft in both Houses of Parliament but the timescales for the laying of the order were not yet clear.

It was reported that if the Boundary Commission proposals for Wilmslow were implemented, as anticipated, adjustments would need to be made to the proposed wards and these adjustments formed the basis of Option 2 recommended by the Sub Committee. In essence, the number of wards in the Wilmslow Parish would be reduced from five to four, as the ward boundaries would no longer be coterminous with polling district boundaries within that Parish. Given the uncertainty posed by the current Boundary Review, and the need to comply with the Governance Review timetable, it was necessary for the Sub-Committee to put forward two alternative sets of proposals with regard to the warding of Wilmslow.

In considering both the numbers of Councillors and the warding arrangements the Sub Committee had had regard to the need to achieve electoral equality as far as possible whilst also ensuring that the size of each Parish Council reflected the particular needs and circumstances of the Parish. The Sub-Committee had reviewed its previous recommendation, which had been endorsed by the Constitution Committee, that for the Parish of Handforth, the election of Parish Councillors should be from the area of the Parish as a whole. It was proposed as an alternative that Handforth be divided into three wards as it was felt that the four existing polling districts lent themselves to such an arrangement, which also reflected the geographical features of the Parish.

Members were advised that if, following the announcement of the Boundary Commission's final recommendations, it became necessary to make further minor adjustments to electorate figures, polling district boundaries or proposed ward boundaries, it would be appropriate for the Officers to be authorised to agree these in consultation with the Chairman of the Sub-Committee and the Leader of the Council so as to avoid any undue delay with the Governance Review timetable.

With reference to the Governance Review timetable the Committee was advised that the next stage of the Governance Review process would be a further public consultation period, running between 11 August and 1 September 2010. In response to concern at this timing it was explained that the total review needed to be completed within 12 months of the receipt of the initial petition. It was agreed, however, that the timing of this consultation period would be further investigated

to see if there was any scope for adjusting it to be outside the summer holiday period.

A discussion ensued on the official name to be applied to any new wards arising from the Boundary Review and it was noted that this was a matter that could be explored further as part of the formal consultation process.

RESOLVED

That the Constitution Committee recommends to Council that

(1) having regard to comparator information for Parish Councils in Cheshire East, and having regard to electoral equality, the number of Councillors to serve on each of the new Parish Councils should be as follows:

- a. Handforth: 7 Councillors
- b. Styal: 5 Councillors
- c. Wilmslow: 15 Councillors

(2) dependent upon the outcome of the Boundary Review, and bearing in mind the need to achieve overall electoral equality (i.e. the number of electors per Councillor) as far as possible:

a. if no changes are made to the current Cheshire East Council Ward boundaries, five wards should be created for the Wilmslow Parish and named as follows:

- i. Morley (comprising 3 Councillors: polling districts 8FH1, 8FJ1, 8FG1);
- ii. Lacey Green (comprising 2 Councillors: polling district 8EK1);
- iii. Dean Row (comprising 4 Councillors: polling districts 8EA1, 8EB1, 8EC1, 8ED1, 8EE1);
- iv. Hough (comprising 3 Councillors: polling districts 8FC1, 8FD1, 8FE1, 8FF1); and
- v. Fulshaw (comprising 3 Councillors: polling districts 8FA1, 8FB1)

b. if the anticipated final recommendations of the Boundary Committee in respect of Cheshire East Council boundaries are implemented, four wards should be created for the Wilmslow Parish and named as follows, to provide coterminous boundaries for electoral purposes:

- i. Wilmslow West (comprising 5 Councillors: polling districts 8FH1, 8FJ1, 8FG1, 8FC1, 8FA1(part), 8FB1(part), 8FD1(part);
- ii. Lacey Green (comprising 2 Councillors: polling districts 8EK1, 8EA1(part), 8FD1(part);
- iii. Dean Row (comprising 4 Councillors: polling districts 8EA1(part), 8EB1, 8EC1, 8ED1, 8EE1); and
- iv. Hough (comprising 4 Councillors: polling districts 8FD1(part), 8FA1(part), 8FB1(part), 8FE1, 8FF1)

(3) three wards should be created for the Handforth Parish and named as follows:

- i. Handforth West (comprising 3 Councillors: polling districts 8EG1, 8EJ1)
- ii. Handforth East (comprising 2 Councillors: polling district 8EH1); and
- iii. Handforth South (comprising 2 Councillors: polling district 8EF1)

and accordingly, the previous recommendation by the Sub-Committee and the Constitution Committee in relation to this matter should be disregarded; and

- (4) subject to consultation initially with the Chairman of the Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub-Committee, the Borough Solicitor be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any amendments required to electorate figures, polling district boundaries, or the proposed Wilmslow Parish ward boundaries, should this be required as a result of the final outcome of the Boundary review.

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and concluded at 4.40 pm

Councillor P Findlow (Chairman)