

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Governance Review Sub-Committee**
held on Thursday, 15th August, 2013 in The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)
Councillor P Groves (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors G Baxendale, J Jackson, B Murphy and P Whiteley.

Councillor in attendance:

Councillor L Jeuda

Officers in attendance:

Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer
Rose Hignett – Senior Electoral Services Officer
Jamie Oliver – Media Relations Officer
Lindsey Parton - Registration Service and Business Manager

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

12 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present.

13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2013 be approved as a correct record.

14 TO REVIEW THE PROCESS FOR THE STAGE 1 CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to the findings of the first stage of consultation with stakeholders and the public which had run from 24 June to 30 July 2013. A resume was given of the 8 public meetings that had been held in each of the Borough Wards, with an additional meeting in the Central Ward, of the publicity that had been given throughout the period, and of the comments and feedback received.

It was agreed that the feedback be considered in detail as part of the following agenda item.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

15 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FEEDBACK FROM THE STAGE 1 CONSULTATION

The Registration Service and Business Manager circulated a summary of the key points raised by the public and by Local Councillors at the public meetings held between 24 June and 30 July 2013; these were considered in conjunction with the meeting notes and the representations that had been received on-line and in hard copy.

In total 114 members of the public had attended the eight public meetings and 90 responses had been received although an additional 165 people had viewed the information on line but had then chosen not to complete the form. Unfortunately the responses from stakeholders had been lower than expected with only 15 out of a possible 137 being received. Following analysis of the views expressed a summary report had been produced and this had been circulated with the agenda papers.

Both Members and Officers were disappointed at the low level of returns and it was speculated that this could be partly due to uncertainty over which assets and services could be transferred to a town or parish council, and to the resultant inability to predict the resulting cost to local residents. In addition the fact that certain assets and services had potentially been excluded from transfer had led some people to believe that the introduction of a new council was perhaps not worthwhile due to the limited nature of what was possible. With regard to this last point it was agreed that the range and scope of the assets and services that could be devolved be discussed further with the Leader and the Cabinet.

Due to the low level of responses the Sub-Committee did not feel it was possible to ascertain with confidence what the public wanted. Comparisons were drawn between the current arrangements and services provided by Congleton and Nantwich Town Councils, and by Poynton Parish Council, all of which were well established, and the newly established and evolving Councils in Wilmslow, Styal, Handforth and Crewe.

It was felt by some that the information given as part of the consultation process should have included more detail in respect of arrangements remaining unchanged and also on the possibility of an enhanced Local Service Delivery Committee. Cllr Brendan Murphy referred to a paper he had prepared on this latter option and it was agreed that he would forward it to the Registration Service and Business Manager for information.

Before proceeding to the next stage it was agreed that more work needed to be done to inform and engage the local community, including young people, by the innovative use of more varied and wider means of communication such as local radio and twitter. It was agreed that the Communications Team should give further consideration to this matter. Also future information should include specific

examples of what other town and parish councils do along with examples of the associated costs to local residents.

RESOLVED

1. That the consultation information be reformatted to include two options in respect of no change with the retention of an enhanced Local Service Delivery Committee; and a Town Council for Macclesfield, and that specific examples of services, functions, and the associated costs be drawn from existing town councils.
2. That the Communications Team prepare a plan on how to make better use of a wider range of media.

16 PROJECT PLAN

RESOLVED

That, in view of the recommendations shown in minute no 15 above, consideration of this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.

17 TO CONSIDER THE STAGE 2 CONSULTATION

RESOLVED

That, in view of the recommendations shown in minute no 15 above, consideration of this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.

18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

That the next meeting date be agreed in due course.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 11.45 am

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)