

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Governance Review Sub-Committee**
held on Thursday, 16th January, 2014 at The Tatton 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.

Councillors in attendance:

Councillors B Livesley and L Smetham.

Officers in attendance:

Lindsey Parton – Registration Services and Business Manager
Rose Hignett – Senior Electoral Services Officer
Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

28 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Keith Smith of Macclesfield Civic Society referred to letter he had submitted, and which had been circulated prior to the meeting, in which the Society made clear its support for the formation of a single Town Council for Macclesfield. This was considered by the Society to be most appropriate for the size and importance of the town, would have local accountability, give opportunities for local involvement and participation, and bring it in line with all the other towns in the Borough. He expressed concern that the draft leaflet did not give an example of what the cost of a special levy might be as he considered this necessary to help people fully understand the different options.

Sue Mason was pleased at the amount of consultation carried out to date but sought reassurance that the final decision would be subject to a public ballot.

Liz Braithwaite was concerned that the draft literature circulated did not detail the areas affected as, in order to fully engage with people, they needed to be clear about whether or not they were affected.

Ray Perry sought clarification of the options available following reference in the local press to the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee. He also was of the view that Macclesfield should have a Town Council to bring it in line with the

other major towns in the Borough and he considered that most people in Macclesfield were of the same opinion.

The Chairman thanked everybody for their contributions and confirmed that all the comments would be noted and taken into consideration. He confirmed that residents would be balloted on the final options and that the purpose of the consultations was to establish the views of electors and interested persons.

29 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2013 were approved as a correct record.

30 NEXT STAGE OF THE REVIEW

The Sub-Committee was asked to consider arrangements for the next stage of consultation in the Community Governance Review with particular regard to the details surrounding the options of either (1) Parishing or (2) an Enhanced Service Delivery Committee (ESDC).

The agenda included examples of the roles of an ESDC, and an Enhanced Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee (ELSDC) and compared them to those of a Parish Council. The Chairman considered it essential that the differences between these were properly understood in order to make an informed decision on the options available.

Concern was expressed that an ELSDC would be limited to making recommendations to Cabinet and would not give any additional democratic representation to the people of Macclesfield by which they could control the assets of the area. An alternative view however was that very little would be gained by the introduction of an additional 12 Councillors. It was noted that the powers of an ELSDC could, for example, be drafted to include control of a small budget, to be a consultee, to be responsible for the use of S106 monies, and to have representatives on key strategic initiatives. In addition a Community Interest Company could be established to which local assets could be transferred.

It was reported that there were examples elsewhere of ELSDC's that operated through Area Committees. This was, however, not considered appropriate in this case as in order to operate effectively they would need to be established across the area as a whole.

The Sub-Committee considered that a TC or an ELSD should have a part in deciding its own responsibilities and that the existing Macclesfield LSDC could look at this in detail on behalf of the Sub-Committee. It was agreed that this should be referred to the next meeting of the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee on 24 January and that its findings be considered further at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

With reference to Parishing consideration was given to what identities and communities existed in Macclesfield and it was suggested that the areas of Broken Cross and Upton; Hurdsfield and Tytherington could be said to have their own sense of identity. It was recognised, however, that all seven wards might want to be individually parished and that this choice should be offered. In order

to accommodate this possibility the questions on the ballot paper would need to be posed in two stages along the lines of: -

- Do you prefer an ESDC or parishing?
followed by
- If you prefer parishing do you want to be in an individual parish of (e.g. Hurdsfield with each area ballot paper being individualised) or in a single parish for the town of Macclesfield?

This would necessitate 7 different ballot papers being drawn up – 1 for each of the 7 wards involved.

Concern was expressed as to how assets would be divided /allocated to any resultant individual parishes and to the funding implications. It was recognised that this was a difficulty as it would be for any individual parish to decide upon its own range of responsibilities once it was established and, as a result, the assets to be transferred and also the final precept could not be accurately predicted.

In response to concerns that the boundaries of some wards might not be accurate it was agreed that they would be looked at further and prior to inclusion in any of the future consultation literature. In addition it was confirmed that that part of the Councils website dealing with the Community Governance Review would be updated at the earliest opportunity to reflect the current position.

RESOLVED

1. That the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee be requested to consider the role of an Enhanced Service Delivery Committee for Macclesfield and that their findings be considered further by this Sub-Committee.
2. That approval be given for Officers to prepare wording for a draft ballot paper to incorporate a question enabling each of the 7 areas (wards) to vote upon becoming an individual parish and that this be considered at the next meeting and then by the Constitution Committee.

31 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee be held on 26 February 2014 at 10.30 am.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.00 pm

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)