

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Community Governance Review Sub-Committee
held on Wednesday, 31st July, 2019 at The Ballroom, Sandbach Town Hall,
High Street, Sandbach, CW11 1AX

PRESENT

Councillor J Bratherton (Chairman)

Councillors M Asquith, L Crane, S Edgar, T Fox and B Murphy

Other Members Present

Councillor J Rhodes

Officers in attendance

Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance

Paul Mountford, Executive Democratic Services Officer

David Laycock, Project Manager

Adrian Fisher, Head of Strategic Planning

Stuart Penny, Planning Policy and CIL Manager

Emily Steer, Research and Consultation

Tracy Betty, Research and Consultation

Apologies

Councillors A Martin and R Moreton

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

3 MEMBER SPEAKING

There were no visiting members wishing to speak.

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2019 be approved
as a correct record.

5 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - BACKGROUND AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Sub-Committee considered a report providing background information on the need for a Borough-wide community governance review, and setting out the terms of reference for that review as previously approved by the Constitution Committee. The report was aimed in particular at benefitting those members who had been appointed to the Sub-Committee since its previous meeting and the local elections in May.

The elections had changed the proportionality of the Sub-Committee which was now 3 Con : 2 Lab : 2 Ind. In addition, a Liberal Democrat and a Real Independent member of the Constitution Committee sat on the Sub-Committee in a non-voting capacity.

RESOLVED

That the report and the terms of reference of the review be noted.

6 ELECTORATE FORECASTS FOR COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW WORK

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the production of forecasts of the future electorate for the parishes of the Borough.

The main rationale for the forecasts was to assess how the size and geographical distribution of electorates was likely to change in the coming years, so that electors could be fairly distributed between councillors.

The forecasts had been produced in accordance with the relevant guidance and the results could be found in appendix A to the report, which also included information on the methodology and assumptions used.

The key outcomes identified in the report related to the forecast period between 2018 and 2025 and to a large extent reflected the expected volume and distribution of future housing development.

RESOLVED

That the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee recommends to the Constitution Committee that

1. the methodology and assumptions used in the Council's CGR Electorate Forecasts Technical report in Appendix A to the report be agreed, which it is acknowledged involves making some variations to the general approach outlined by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's guidance, and that its findings are taken forward for consideration as part of the next stage of the community governance review process; and

2. the proposals for new housing identified in the Council's Local Plan be used as a sense check against the figures forecast by the technical report in Appendix A, and they be used as a further consideration at the next stage of the community governance review process.

7 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW PROJECT REPORT

The Sub-Committee considered a report on progress to date which also proposed an amended timeline for the review.

The project working group had been meeting regularly up until the end of March 2019. At that time the project was paused to allow Democratic Services to focus on the impending local and European elections. This had resulted in a three month shift in the timeline previously presented to the Sub-Committee. This would still leave more than adequate time for the review to be completed before the local elections in 2023. A revised timeline was attached as Appendix A to the report.

Detailed analysis of all the wards in the Borough had now been undertaken and was included in Appendix B. This included data showing electorate numbers taken from the 2019 electoral register; the number of councillor seats representing each ward; wards where the respective town/parish council had requested a review within the last 12 months or so; and electorate growth forecasts up to 2025 (the period advised by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England).

RESOLVED

That the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee

1. notes the contents of the report;
2. notes the analysis prepared to date;
3. notes that any resident or representative body will be able to suggest the inclusion (or exclusion) of particular wards/parishes; and
4. recommends that the Constitution Committee approve
 - (a) the process and amended timeline for the review as set out in Appendix A to the report;
 - (b) that the analysis of wards as set out in Appendix B to the report be published as part of the pre-consultation survey; and
 - (c) the initiation of the pre-consultation survey based upon the text attached as Appendix C.

The meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 3.35 pm

Councillor J Bratherton (Chairman)