

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Community Governance Review Sub-Committee
held on Monday, 4th April, 2022 in the The Assembly Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillors M Asquith, J Bratherton, C Browne, L Crane, S Edgar, A Martin and A Stott

Other Members present

Councillors J Clowes, D Edwardes, J P Findlow, L Gilbert, B Puddicombe, D Murphy and L Smetham

Officers in attendance

Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance
Peter Jones, Planning, Highways and Litigation Lawyer
Nick Billington, Economic Research & Intelligence Officer
Diane Barnard, Electoral Services Team Leader
Sandra Hobbs, Senior Elections Officer
Leanne Austin, Elections Officer
Rose Hignett, Elections Consultant
Laura Bateman, Senior Project Manager
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

Apologies

Councillor P Williams

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor J Bratherton be appointed Chair for the current municipal year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED

That Councillor A Martin be appointed Vice-Chair for the current municipal year.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Sub-Committee was advised that Sub-paragraph (h) of Paragraph 30 of the Cheshire East Member Code of Conduct recorded a dispensation effective until 28 September 2024, which allowed Members to take part and vote on Community Governance Review matters in which they had

disclosable pecuniary and prejudicial interests. Due to the prevalence of 'dual hatted' Members, membership of a town or parish council did not of itself need to be specifically declared by virtue of the dispensation. However, if the Member was aware of some compounding factor, or any other pecuniary or prejudicial interest that could not reasonably have been anticipated by the dispensation, that interest should be declared.

There were no declarations of interest.

4 PUBLIC AND VISITING CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLORS - SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Prior to public speaking, the Chair thanked the members of the Sub-Committee and the officers for their work over the last three years of the community governance review which had continued over the period of the pandemic.

The following is a brief summary of the submissions made.

Councillor Ken Edwards, Bollington Town Council, began by congratulating the officers on what he said was a clear and well organised report. He went on to express his council's disappointment that the report did not recommend the Town Council's proposal that the boundary between Bollington and Rainow be amended to include the settlement at Ingersley Vale within Bollington. He asked that the matter be reviewed as part of the next Cheshire East ward boundary review.

Mr Brian Jones, Tytherington Lane, Bollington, objected to properties in Bollington being transferred to Macclesfield.

Councillor Fiona Wilson, Deputy Mayor of Macclesfield, welcomed the revised recommendations for Macclesfield that the current seating allocation worked well and that a community governance review of the Town Council would be premature.

Councillor Chris Jackson, Chair of Holmes Chapel Parish Council, expressed the council's disappointment that the area comprising the Bluebell Green and Dunkirk Farm residential developments was not to be transferred from Brereton to Holmes Chapel.

Mr Peter Turner, Town Clerk of Crewe Town Council, expressed the council's disappointment that the proposals for Crewe did not address issues of underrepresentation within Crewe or the significant residential developments that had taken place on the outskirts of Crewe outside the town's boundary.

Councillor Roger Dawson, Vice-Chair of Alpraham Parish Council, expressed his council's disappointment that the proposed merger of Alpraham and Calveley did not include the parish of Wardle.

Councillor Andy Lindsay, Chair of Brereton Parish Council, congratulated the Council's officers on what had been a difficult task in dealing with so many consultation inputs. He indicated his council's support for the proposals for Brereton, including the retention of Bluebell Green and Dunkirk Farm within the parish of Brereton and the adjustment of the boundary with Somerford to align with Holmes Chapel Road.

Councillor L Smetham, expressed her support, and that of parishes and residents, for the recommendations relating to parishes within the Gawsorth ward and asked that the Sub-Committee support them. She also asked Democratic Services to consider bringing Daintry Hall back into availability as a polling station for North Rode.

Councillor L Gilbert, disagreed with the proposal not to transfer the area of Bluebell Green and Dunkirk Farm from Brereton to Holmes Chapel and asked the Sub-Committee to support the transfer for reasons of community identity.

Councillor D Murphy, speaking as the Mayor of Congleton, expressed the Town Council's view that all housing and business development on land contained within the new link road should be included within the area of Congleton Town, the link road forming a natural boundary.

Councillor J Clowes began by thanking the Sub-Committee and the officers for their work on the review. She then indicated that with regard to Doddington and District, Hatherton and Walgherton, and Hough and Chorlton parish councils she was satisfied with the recommendations in the report. With regard to the boundary between the parishes of Wybunbury and Shavington, she urged the Sub-Committee to revert to its original proposal that Newcastle Road form the boundary between the two parishes.

Councillor P Findlow supported the proposal to retain the two separate parishes of Over Alderley and Mottram St Andrew. He also asked that the proposal to include the whole of Dumbah Lane within the parish of Prestbury, which was not recommended in the report, be supported for reasons of community cohesion and that the electoral risk referred to in the report as the reason for not supporting the proposal be mitigated.

The Head of Democratic Services and Governance read out a written statement on behalf of Councillor D Marren who was unable to attend the meeting. Councillor Marren had been impressed with the way in which the Sub-Committee and officers had listened to the views of the residents of Shavington cum Gresty and as a result had altered the original proposals as set out in the pre-consultation survey. He felt that the revised proposals now before the Sub-Committee addressed most of his concerns and he felt confident that they would address the concerns of most residents of Shavington cum Gresty Parish. It was therefore his intention to support the recommendations without amendment.

At the conclusion of public and member speaking, officers advised that it was for the Sub-Committee to consider the comments made when considering the report. Officers also advised the Sub-Committee that there were risks in changing recommendations that had already been carefully developed after taking into consideration the guidance, the law and responses to the consultation.

In response to issues raised under public speaking, officers advised that the recommendation for the boundary between Bollington and Macclesfield was to make no changes. With regard to the merger of Alpraham and Calveley, the officers advised that Wardle Parish Council had objected to being included in that merger.

Councillor A Stott sought advice from the officers on what constituted 'electoral risk'. Officers advised that if a parish boundary was moved across a Borough ward boundary, there would be a risk during elections of wrong ballot papers being issued.

Councillor S Edgar expressed concern about comments made by Councillor Clowes that misleading information had been circulated to residents during the Shavington cum Gresty survey regarding their having to change their children's school or attend a different medical centre if the parish boundary were changed. He also asked how many residents from Gresty had commented on the proposals regarding the Shavington-Wyburnbury triangle. Officers responded that the survey had been conducted by Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council and that Cheshire East Council had no information on how it had been conducted or on the information included or questions asked.

5 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

The Sub-Committee considered a report which sought resolutions of the Community Governance Review Sub Committee, Corporate Policy Committee, and finally Council, following a Community Governance Review of Town and Parish Council Governance.

The review had been in progress for over three years. Engagement with the public, town and parish councils and other stakeholders had been central to the review. There had been an informal pre-consultation survey, as well as a formal consultation process which, together, had secured over 5,000 responses.

The background to the review, including the terms of reference, guiding principles and process followed, were set out in the report.

Appendix 1 to the report provided a summary of the review's final recommendations. Appendix 2 contained maps showing recommended changes to parish and parish ward boundaries. Appendix 3 set out in detail

the evidence and analysis on which the final recommendations had been made.

Councillor S Edgar, on behalf of the relevant parish councils, asked that the style of the new Weston and Crewe Green council be changed from 'Community' to 'Parish'. With the Sub-Committee's agreement, the officers undertook to change the recommendation to Council accordingly.

RESOLVED

That

1. the Sub-Committee recommends to the Corporate Policy Committee that the recommendations made in the review of Community Governance, contained in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to the report, will ensure that:
 - A. The proposed community governance arrangements reflect the identities and interests of the community in the Borough of Cheshire East; and
 - B. The proposed community governance arrangements are effective and convenient; and
2. in order to minimise unnecessary printing of agenda papers, it will be assumed that all Members of the Corporate Policy Committee, and Council, will rely upon the electronic link to the appendices of the report, and that the appendices will therefore not be printed for each Member; further, that if any Member has a specific need for any part of parts of the appendices to be printed, they will make their own arrangements to print limited sections of the appendices, or request such printed sections to be provided by officers.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.28 pm

Councillor J Bratherton (Chair)