

## **Community Governance Review Sub Committee** **Briefing note**

### **Current Position**

The Macclesfield Community Governance Review is now at the end of the first stage of consultation with stakeholders and the public. This was agreed by the Sub- Committee to run from 24 June to 23 July 2013, but was subsequently extended to 30 July to allow sufficient time for feedback to be received from an additional public meeting, arranged at Macclesfield Town Hall on 22 July 2013. As part of the consultation process, contact was made with approximately 127 stakeholders, as identified by the Sub-Committee with assistance from local ward Members.

8 public meetings were held in each of the Borough Wards, including an additional meeting in the Macclesfield Central Ward. The majority of the meetings were held in the evening and varied in terms of levels of attendance. In total 114 people attended the various public meetings. Notes taken at the meetings have been circulated with the Sub-Committee agenda.

Publicity for the stage 1 consultation and public meetings has included press releases to local press and media and a published public notice in the Macclesfield Express. Information has also been provided on the website, with a link to the front page and designation as a “hot topic”, and by social media channels.

Assistance was also provided with publicity by the Thread e-newsletter and by Your- vibe who circulated information to local Youth Groups via their contacts.

A flyer/ poster was designed to publicise the meetings which was widely distributed with support from the LAP Team and the Macclesfield Town Centre Manager. Local supermarkets were also used to publicise the final meeting held on 22 July at Macclesfield Town Hall at the request of a local ward Councillor. Local Ward Councillors in many cases also distributed copies of the flyers within their wards. Each meeting venue was also requested to display the flyer in a prominent position to advertise the meeting date.

Exhibition boards publicising the review have been located in the Macclesfield Customer Centre and the LAP team have promoted the review at local meetings held during the consultation period and by handing out information on several days within the Grosvenor Centre.

An A4 and an A5 leaflet were prepared to support the review; together with a consultation feedback form which was made available electronically and in hard copy format.

The Sub Committee will meet as required during August to assess the feedback received to date; to agree the wording to be included on the ballot paper to be sent to all electors in September 2013 as part of the Stage 2 consultation; and to agree further publicity required.

In addition to the main A4 double sided leaflet, members may wish to also provide a summary A5 leaflet for dispatch with the ballot packs. Feedback from the public has shown that people have valued having more information, rather than less, on which to base their decision, and for this reason the sub-Committee may wish to consider posting out the fuller A4 version to electors in addition to a summary leaflet. The Sub Committee will need to agree an approval process for the final sign off of the ballot material and associated publicity in the event that it is not possible to conclude this work at the two meetings scheduled in August.

A copy of the print specification for the ballot and the proposed timescales have been circulated with the Sub Committee agenda.

During the stage 2 consultation it will still be open for anyone to respond to the general consultation and the online form on the website will remain active. All responses received will be collated for consideration at future sub committee meetings to aid the decision making process. Further work will be done to engage young people in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form colleges during the next stage of consultation as the importance of engaging young people has been recognised by the Sub Committee. All 16 and 17 year olds, included on the electoral register, will also be sent a ballot paper during the Stage 2 consultation.

### **Summary of Feedback from Stage 1 Consultation - as at 7 August 2013**

90 responses have been received from the Stage 1 Consultation. In addition a further 165 people viewed the on-line consultation response form but then chose not to complete it.

The response from stakeholders has been lower than expected, as the results from the feedback show that the majority of respondents were not responding on behalf of a local organisation. Only 15 of the responses were from those identified on the stakeholders list. The Sub Committee may therefore wish, as part of the Stage 2 consultation, for Stakeholders to be contacted again to give them a further opportunity to comment and submit their views.

### **Analysis of Responses**

With the exception of 12 responses, all the results have been analysed and included in the electronically generated summary report. A covering letter was also received from the Cheshire East Green Party and the Macclesfield Constituency Labour Party which have been included for information – but their completed consultation forms are included within the main electronic summary and do not need to be counted separately.

In summary, the 12 letters / emails returned demonstrate the following views:

J Brocklehurst	"This could provide an opportunity for Macclesfield to have its own council".
B Houghton	No change
K Williams	Supports an elected town council
Rainow Parish Council	Supports a single parish
R Perry	Supports a Town Council for Macclesfield
S Broadhead	Macclesfield should have elected representatives. Each ward in Macclesfield should have a local rep.
K Edwards	Strongly supports the introduction of a democratically elected, responsible body capable of raising a precept for local services, capable of long term planning for the Town and capable of framing the aspirations of the Macclesfield community as a whole in an open, accountable and responsible manner. A Macclesfield Town Council would fulfil this role.
Peaks and Plains Housing Trust	Shall be pleased to engage with whatever structure is determined as a result of this review.
S Hobbs	In favour of a parish council for Macclesfield, based on the current warding arrangements for Cheshire East
Sutton Parish Council	It is more appropriate for the residents of Macclesfield to determine, from the options available, their own means of local representation and administration.
D Langley	Wants to see a local Macclesfield Town Council
J Spencer	Town Council would be the best form of local governance. Feels that 8 parish councils should be created based upon existing wards in Macclesfield.

In terms of the responses which have been separately analysed, there were 65 completed and 13 partially completed surveys. From these responses, in summary:

82.1% of those who responded to the question felt that a parish / town council was the best for Macclesfield.

81.8% of those who responded to the question felt that one Town/ Parish council should be created in the current unparished area of Macclesfield.

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 7 August 2013