

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Governance Review Sub-Committee** held on Wednesday, 26th February, 2014 in The Silk Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

## PRESENT

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

Councillors G Baxendale, J Jackson and L Smetham (as substitute).

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Councillors K Edwards and D Neilson.

### **Officers in attendance:**

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

## 32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Murphy and P Whiteley.

## 33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 34 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

**Liz Braithwaite** asked whether in the event of each ward being given the option of voting for a Town or Parish Council would the option also be given for each to have an individual Service Delivery Committee. The Chairman responded that he felt such an option would be unworkable.

**Councillor Janet Jackson** interceded at this stage and asked for it to be recorded that she was most dissatisfied at the way in which the direction of the community review in Macclesfield was being pushed by some Members of the Sub-Committee and by the leading political group. She stated she was the only Macclesfield Councillor on the Committee, and, despite being best placed to know and understand the views of the community, she considered she was being consistently ignored. The Chairman responded that the decision would be made by taking account of the public consultation and other key factors and, ultimately, by the Constitution Committee and full Council.

**Richard Watson** commented on the voting paper tabled prior to the meeting and suggested that Q1b should be amended to say 'I want a parish/town council'; this was suggested in the light of the previous experience in Crewe when it became apparent that people did not realise that a town council was a form of parish council. The Chairman responded that initially it was in fact necessary to form a parish council and only then could it vote for itself to be known as a town council.

### **35 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2014 were considered. With reference to Minute 30 (Next Stage of the Review) Councillor J Jackson said she had asked for it to be recorded that she had voted against the ballot paper being drafted to allow each individual ward to vote upon becoming an individual parish.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2014 be approved subject to the inclusion of the amendment detailed above.

### **36 THE ROLE OF AN ENHANCED MACCLESFIELD LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE**

Further to the last meeting consideration was given to the proposed role of an Enhanced Service Delivery Committee and Assembly meetings; this followed the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee (LSDC) having been asked to consider what it would consider should be the role of an Enhanced LSDC; an appendix to the report summarised their comments.

The Sub-Committee was advised that the comments of the LSDC had now been included in the draft proposals for the role of an Enhanced LSDC and its Terms of Reference. Members considered each of the papers circulated and made a number of comments and changes on each. *These have been appended to the minutes for reference.* The Constitution Committee would consider the recommendations from the Sub-Committee and be responsible for making the final decision as to what was included.

The Sub-Committee was informed that further legal advice was currently awaited to ensure that the proposed Terms of Reference met the necessary legal requirements and that they would be amended to take any such advice into account.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the proposals for the Role of an Enhanced Service Delivery Committee, and the Terms of Reference, be amended as now requested prior to consideration by the Constitution Committee.

### **37 DRAFT LEAFLET TO SUPPORT THE REVIEW**

The Sub-Committee was asked to consider and agree the wording for the main leaflet to support the review. It had been updated to reflect comments made at the last meeting and also those of the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee on 23 January. It was reported that ChALC (the Cheshire Association of Local Councils) had been consulted and any changes necessitated by their response would be incorporated in the leaflet.

Some concern was expressed at the level of detail now included in the leaflet. It was explained that the information had been expanded to answer previous concerns in respect of the possible lack of understanding of the general public regarding the options available and the process required. A summarised version

of the leaflet could be prepared and sent out to electors to accompany the voting paper.

With reference to financial implications included it was noted that some indicative costs were now available and that these would be included when the leaflet was considered by the Constitution Committee. With regard to the costs of other Town and Parish Councils, given as examples, it was noted that the differences in the services they each provided, and the resulting costs per property, served as a good example of how each individual Town or Parish Council could be run in the manner most appropriate to its own area, and to the facilities, services and resources available to it.

The Sub-Committee considered the leaflet in detail and made a number of comments and changes. *These have been appended to the minutes for reference.*

As the amended documentation was now to be considered by the Constitution Committee it was requested that any further comments be sent direct to the Registration and Business Services Manager, and that authority be delegated to the Chairman to approve the amended document prior to its submission.

#### **RESOLVED**

That any additional comments be sent direct to the Registration and Business Services Manager and that the amended document be approved by the Chairman prior to its submission to the Constitution Committee.

### **38 ASSISTANCE FOR THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Registration and Business Services Manager informed the Committee that ChALC was in receipt of a small grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government for use with community groups who wished to support the creation of a Town or Parish Council in their area. ChALC had also offered their assistance as the review progressed and would be happy to attend future meetings of the Sub-Committee as required.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the update be noted and that the offer of attendance of a representative from ChALC at future meetings of the Sub-Committee be welcomed.

### **39 SECOND STAGE CONSULTATION**

Consideration was given to the draft wording of the voting paper for the second stage of the consultation, a copy of which was circulated prior to the meeting.

It was suggested that a clear explanation needed to be given as to the meaning of town and parish Council. It was reported that in addition to the voting paper a leaflet would also be sent to electors and it was intended that this would contain a detailed explanation of such points and that the Constitution Committee would agree the content and detail of the literature to be circulated at that time. The Sub-Committee was advised that there would also be further publicity measures in place to encourage people to vote.

## **RESOLVED**

That the wording of the draft ballot paper be approved for use for the second stage of the consultation.

*Councillor J Jackson asked for it to be noted that she had voted against this resolution as she did not support the option of the 7 separate Parish Councils.*

## **40 PUBLICITY ARRANGEMENTS**

A discussion took place on the publicity to be put in place at the time of the second stage of the consultation and it was confirmed that suggestions made at previous meetings would be further explored. Publicity measures would include the use of twitter, updating the website, advance public notices in the press, public meetings through ChALC, and the distribution of literature locally.

## **RESOLVED**

That approval be given to the suggested publicity measures detailed above.

## **41 PROJECT PLAN**

Consideration was given to the project plan and the deadlines for the various stages leading up to the second stage of the consultation. In response to a question concerning the procedure in the event of the results of the ballot not providing any clear preference, Members were informed that the Sub-Committee would initially consider the results along with any additional information that came forward at that time and that the matter would then be considered by the Constitution Committee. Ultimately, however, it would be for the Council to decide on the best way forward.

## **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.50 pm

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)