

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Governance Review Sub-Committee

held on Tuesday, 7th October, 2014 in The Tatton Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)

Councillor P Groves (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Jackson, B Murphy and P Whiteley.

Councillors in attendance:

Councillors K Edwards, L Jeuda, D Neilson and L Smetham.

Officers in attendance:

Lindsey Parton – Registration Services and Business Manager

Rose Hignett – Senior Electoral Services Officer

Brian Reed – Head of Governance and Democratic Services

Cherry Foreman – Democratic Services Officer

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor D Marren be confirmed as Chairman, and Councillor P Groves as Vice-chairman, of the Community Review Sub-Committee for the 2014/15 municipal year.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Baxendale.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Keith Smith, representing Macclesfield Civic Society, said they had been disappointed in the turnout but it could be seen from the votes cast that an LSDC was not a popular choice. The majority was in favour of a parishing in some form with a single Town Council being the preferred option; this is what should be recommended to the Constitution Committee. He questioned why Macclesfield was the only area that did not have a lower tier authority of its own.

Liz Braithwaite supported the views expressed by Keith Smith. She referred to information on the Cheshire East website that said Town and Parish Councils were a critical part of local government infrastructure, with a significant range of

powers and duties and a key role in representing communities. 113 communities already had their own Town and Parish Councils and there was no reason why Macclesfield should be any different.

In response to a question as to why there had not been any public meetings during the consultation period she was advised that in the light of the low turnout at meetings during the stage one consultation, with approx. 114 members of the public attending, it had been felt more appropriate to use the direct mail method which ensured every household was reached.

Roy Spoors, of the CAB, spoke in respect of Macclesfield's position as a market town, with an influence beyond the central parishes, and he considered a wider area should have been consulted. He said that in their correspondence a number of people had made the point that they were confused about the options available and there was a question therefore regarding the way in which the information had been conveyed and whether the process had fully engaged the public.

With specific reference to the CAB he said that during the past 3 years they had lost 50% of their funding and Cheshire East Council was now its main source. However, strong partnerships had been developed with existing Town Councils, providing very positive feedback and assistance with funding, and the lack of a Town Council in Macclesfield was a problem. He did not see why it should be different to elsewhere and stressed that if there was not to be Town Council then the Sub-Committee should consider running a fresh consultation with the wider community.

In response to questions concerning publicity for the stage two consultation the Registration and Business Services Manager summarised the measures employed, which had included information on the website, public notice in the local press, leaflets distributed via the Town Centre Manager and placed in the customer centres and local libraries, notices, and assistance from the communications team.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2014 be approved as a correct record.

6 MACCLESFIELD COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Sub-Committee was asked to consider the outcome and feedback received from the Macclesfield Community Governance Review consultation in order to make a recommendation to the Constitution Committee regarding the next steps of the review.

The Review had commenced in June 2013 and the report included an outline of the process followed, and the results of the stage 1 consultation, on the basis of which the second stage had been carried out on the options of either Parishing or an Enhanced Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee (ELSDC).

The second stage of the consultation had been carried out between 2 June and 28 July this year and a summary of the voting and the representations received was attached to the report; in total 16.15% of voting papers had been returned with an additional 35 written representations.

In discussing the outcome of the consultation it was requested that the existing Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee should be asked for its views. Concern was expressed, however, that this was outside their terms of reference and that the decision rested with the Constitution Committee. In the light of Officer advice it was agreed that, although this did fall outside the remit of the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee, it would be very useful to seek such a view informally and for members of the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee to then be invited to attend the meeting of the Constitution Committee to advise it of their views.

RESOLVED

1. That the Macclesfield Local Service Delivery Committee (LSDC) be informally consulted on the outcome of the consultation of the Macclesfield Community Governance Review, and that the informal views of the LSDC be reported to the next meeting of the Constitution Committee in order to inform the decision making process.
2. That the members of the LSDC be invited to attend the next meeting of the Constitution Committee to express their view.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.20 am

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)