

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL
CREWE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

PUBLICATION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE
FIRST PHASE OF CONSULTATION

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 permits the Council to undertake a community governance review of the whole or part of the Borough Council area.

The Review

Cheshire East Council in accordance with Section 83(2) of the Act is undertaking a community governance review following receipt of a valid petition on 30 March 2009 which called for a community governance review and identified three recommendations arising from a Review:

- 1) That a new parish be constituted under section 87 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 2) That the new parish should have a Council to be known as Crewe Town Council.
- 3) That the area to which the review is to relate is the whole of the Electoral wards of Coppenhall, Delamere, Grosvenor, Maw Green, St Johns, Valley and Waldron; and those parts of the following Electoral wards which do not already fall into an existing parish: Alexandra, Leighton, St Barnabas, Wistaston Green.

In conducting the Review, the Council would respond to the proposal contained in the petition, but in accordance with the guidance, would also consider other viable options for other forms of community governance including Area committees, Neighbourhood Management, Tenant Management organisations, Area/ Community forums, Residents and Tenants Associations, Community Associations and whether people would prefer 4 Parish councils to be created.

An explanatory leaflet about the community governance review was prepared and used as a basis for the first phase of consultation which ran from 1 - 30 September 2009.

This community governance review would provide the Council with an opportunity to examine and review existing community governance arrangements and to consider whether or not new arrangements were required to best meet the needs of local people.

The first stage of consultation sought views from all electors by way of a voting paper delivered to each elector with the explanatory leaflet. A questionnaire and similar explanatory leaflet about the review was sent to various stakeholders including local public and voluntary organisations, schools, health bodies and resident and community groups. Two public

meetings were held on 1 September 2009. The website was also used to allow people to record their views online.

Consideration has been given to the comments and representations received from this first phase of consultation and on the basis of these representations the Council's draft recommendations are now published and detailed below.

Criteria and aim of the Review

Section 93 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 requires councils to ensure that community governance in the area under review will be reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area and is effective and convenient. In considering this criteria the Council is required to take account of a number of influential factors including the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion.

The Guidance on community governance reviews published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in April 2008 sets out in detail the factors for consideration to help inform the Council's judgement against the statutory criteria.

Previously Unparished Areas

The Council is required by law to consider other forms of community governance as alternatives or as stages towards establishing parish councils. The Council has noted the existing arrangements in place in the area for community representation and community engagement, including the Crewe Local Area Partnership, Neighbourhood Management, Tenant Management organisations, Area/ Community forums, Residents and Tenants Associations and Community Associations and the extent to which they were already creating opportunities for engagement, empowerment and co-ordination in local communities. The Crewe Local Area Partnership was formed following the creation of the new Cheshire East Council on 1 April and these arrangements were still in their infancy and continually developing. Further time was required to see these arrangements develop to their full potential.

Consultation

In reaching its draft recommendation in this review, the Council has taken account of the representations received having regard to the criteria in the Local Government and Public Improvement in Health Act 2007.

Result of consultation with electors

Just under 35,000 voting papers were issued and 8056 were returned (23%). Electors were invited to respond to two questions on the voting paper and the results were as follows:-

Question 1
1. I want a parish council for my area
2. I want no change to the current arrangements (no parish council)
Question 2: You can still vote for your preference even if you have voted above for no change
A. A single Town Council for the whole of the unparished area of Crewe
B. Four parish councils for the unparished area of Crewe

In relation to Question 1 – the results were:

3655 electors indicated that they wanted a parish council.

4059 electors indicated that they wanted no change to the current arrangements (no parish council).

In relation to Question 2 – the results were:

5617 electors expressed a view for a single town council for the whole of the unparished area of Crewe

1475 electors expressed a view for four parish councils for the unparished area of Crewe.

Submissions received to date

The Council received 41 representations in total. These comprised:

Form of Representation	Number received	Views expressed
Questionnaires Returned	20	17 preferred a single town council 2 preferred more than one local council 1 preferred area/ community/ neighbourhood forums with real powers
Letters/ emails	21	11 were in favour of a single town council 4 expressed no clear view (1 felt that the form was poorly written) 4 supported no change (1 felt that the voting paper was ambiguous and bias towards setting up a Town or Parish Council) 1 was in favour of 4 parish councils 1 was in favour of local representation, but no view expressed as to whether 1 single town council or 4 Parish councils should be created.

Form of Representation	Number received	Views expressed
Charter Trustees (where not included in results above)	6	<p>3 supported a Single Town Council</p> <p>1 supported no change</p> <p>1 supported the outcome of the consultation exercise</p> <p>1 supported whatever the people of Crewe wanted</p>

Draft Recommendation

The draft recommendation of the Council for the outcome of the review, as agreed at the Council meeting held on 15 October 2009 is:-

“To accept the vote from the people of Crewe and to reject the notion of a town council for Crewe at this time.”

Community Governance Review Timetable

The draft recommendation of the Council on the outcome of the review will be published by 30 November 2009, followed by the commencement of a further 5 week period of consultation closing on 8 January 2010.

Representations received on the draft recommendation will be submitted for consideration by Cheshire East Council at its meeting of the full Council on 25 February 2010 when the final decision on the review will be taken.

Any changes which may result from this review will be implemented in time to operate at the next local elections in May 2011.

Representations on the Council's draft recommendation are being invited from all interested persons, organisations, stakeholders and the public. Interested parties are encouraged to submit their views, together with any relevant supporting evidence.

Contact Details:

Please express your views in writing to:
 Lindsey Parton
 Elections and Registration Team Manager
 Cheshire East Council
 Westfields, Middlewich Road
 Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

Or by Email to: communitygovernance@cheshireeast.gov.uk
 Or via the Council's website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

All submissions must be received by 5pm on 8 January 2010.