

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub-Committee
held on Thursday, 21st October, 2010 at The Silk Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1DX

PRESENT

Councillor J Crockatt (Chairman)
Councillor P Whiteley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors G Barton and S Jones

Officers

Lindsey Parton, Elections and Registration Team Manager
Mike Flynn, Review Team Officer
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services
Paul Goodwin, Finance

Apologies

Councillors R Cartlidge and D Stockton

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

19 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2010 be approved as a correct record.

21 EXTENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE

As requested by the Sub-Committee, the Constitution Committee at its meeting on 30th September 2010 had extended the Sub-Committee's terms of reference by resolving as follows:

"That the terms of reference of the Wilmslow Community Governance Review Sub-Committee be extended to enable it to make recommendations on precepting for any new parishes created by the

Review and to deal with such governance, accommodation and other preparations as may be required.”

22 WILMSLOW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - BUDGETS AND PARISH PRECEPTS

Without prejudice to the outcome of the Community Governance Review, the Sub-Committee considered a report on the setting of an appropriate budget and the calculation and levying of a precept for the first year of operation of each of the proposed parish councils.

Jackie Weaver, Chief Officer of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC), and her colleague Linda Davenport, were in attendance at the Sub-Committee’s invitation and the Chairman welcomed them to the meeting.

Local ward councillors who were not members of the Sub-Committee had also been invited to attend but were not present, Councillor Menlove having submitted his apologies.

Parish precepts would need to be raised for any new Parish Councils created, to cover the administration costs for the municipal year 2011/12. It was also necessary to take into account corporate proposals agreed by Cabinet on 19th July 2010 for the devolution of services to parish councils. Further discussions would be required regarding the likely impact of this programme upon the newly-formed parish councils. However, the Sub-Committee was informed that with regard to the transfer of services, there would be no impact on town and parish council precepts through the initiative until April 2012.

In order to consider and determine reasonable budgets for the new parish councils, the Sub-Committee had before it information on existing parishes in the Borough regarding Council Tax base and precept. This enabled Members to identify tax bases and precepts for parishes similar in size to the three proposed parishes in order to determine appropriate budgets and precepts for the first year of operation of the new councils.

The Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) had supplied examples of budgets for both a small and a large Parish Council which had been considered at the last meeting and were included again in the report in order to give some idea of the likely setting up and running costs.

In considering the setting of budgets and precepts for the new parish councils, Members had regard to the need to ensure that on the one hand each council had sufficient resources to carry it through its first year while on the other hand budgets were kept within reasonable limits in view of the current financial climate.

Jackie Weaver provided some useful background information on the likely costs and resource requirements of each of the parish councils in its first year of operation.

RESOLVED

That the following budgets be recommended for the proposed parish councils for the year 2011/12:

Styal Parish Council	-	£6,000	Indicative Council tax of £20.00 per Band D property
Handforth Parish Council	-	£85,000	Indicative Council tax of £28.00 per Band D property
Wilmslow Parish Council	-	£375,000	Indicative Council tax of £35.00 per Band D property

(Note: The indicative Council tax rates above are based on the estimated tax bases of the respective new parishes. Actual tax bases for 2011/12 will be known in time for setting Council taxes in February 2011.)

Jackie Weaver undertook to work with Paul Goodwin to provide some illustrative details of how the parish councils could work within the agreed budgets.

Jackie and her colleague, Linda Davenport, were thanked for their helpful contribution to the Sub-Committee's deliberations.

The Sub-Committee also wished to place on record its thanks to Paul Goodwin, Finance Officer, in preparing and presenting his report.

23 WILMSLOW COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - FINAL RECOMMENDATION FOR THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW

The Sub-Committee would be requested at its next meeting to make a recommendation to the Constitution Committee for the final outcome of the Community Governance Review, taking into account the representations received from the Stage 2 consultation. The Constitution Committee would then be asked to make a recommendation to Council.

The report considered by the Sub-Committee at its last meeting had been circulated with the agenda to aid the Sub-Committee in its deliberations.

The Council would be required to approve a Re-organisation Order to give effect to the final outcome of the review, in the event that new parish councils were created. The first draft of the Re-organisation Order was circulated at the meeting. Mike Flynn advised that both sets of warding arrangements for Wilmslow had been included to take account of the outcome of the Boundary Commission's review of wards in Cheshire East.

Members agreed that an amendment be made to the draft Order to the effect that if new ward boundaries were introduced, the ward currently referred to as Hough would be renamed as Wilmslow East. Members also agreed that the Order should contain both polling district references and a map.

The draft Order included, at paragraph 11, a transitional provision whereby the six Borough ward Members for the area would represent the three parishes until the parish councils were elected in April 2011. An alternative would be for the Sub-Committee to assume this role. Members agreed to consider the options further at the next meeting.

Mike Flynn also advised the Sub-Committee on progress with the Boundary Commission's review of ward boundaries in Cheshire East, and the implications for the community governance review. The 40 day period for the Order to be objected to would expire on Saturday 20th November. If there were no objections to the draft Order, the Statutory Instrument would be made early in the new year. The Sub-Committee and Constitution Committee would be asked to formulate final recommendations on warding in Wilmslow and Handforth and propose the Community Governance Review Order for adoption by Council at its meeting on 16th December. If there were objections to the Order, then a debate might have to be held in Parliament which could delay the completion of the Community Governance Review, the time allowed for which would expire in February. The Officers were considering the implications in detail and would advise further at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

That

- (1) the draft Order be approved subject to the changes agreed and an updated version, including the agreed precepting arrangements, be submitted to the next meeting; and
- (2) the implications of the Boundary Commission review be noted and a further report be submitted to the next meeting.

24 NEXT MEETING

To be agreed in consultation with members of the Sub-Committee.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.35 am

Councillor J Crockatt (Chairman)