

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

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

held on Friday, 19th August, 2011 in the East Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

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

Councillors R Cartlidge, B Murphy and P Whiteley.

Officers:

Lindsey Parton, Registration Services and Business Manager
Natalie Bown, Policy Officer Performance and Partnerships
Cherry Foreman, Democratic Services Officer

In attendance:

Councillor S Hogben

6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Baxendale.

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Cartlidge declared a personal interest by virtue of being the Mayor of Crewe.

8 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

9 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2011 be approved as a correct record subject to 'Red Shift Radio' being added to the list of proposed consultees listed in (3)a of the resolution, and Crewe Alexander Football Club being amended to Crewe Alexandra Football Club.

10 CREWE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Consideration was given to the project plan and timetable for the Crewe Community Governance Review which had been circulated with the agenda meeting papers, and to proposed publicity and consultation arrangements as circulated at the meeting.

a) Project Plan and Timetable

A revised project plan and timetable, incorporating changes made at the last meeting, was considered. A summary of the Community Governance Review (CGR) guidance, circulated previously, made reference to the need to take into account any existing Parish boundary anomalies. It was noted that there was a discrepancy in the boundaries in the area 1FJ4, containing approx 400 electors, whereby they would need to be asked if they wished to be included in the area of Crewe Town or Leighton Parish. It was possible that the area concerned would require a specifically worded ballot paper as had been the case for Handforth and Styal in the Wilmslow review.

A query was raised regarding the initial press release which referred to the review lasting 12 months; it was agreed that this should be amended to it being completed within 12 months.

b) Draft Leaflet to Consultees and Electors

At the last meeting copies had been circulated of the public information leaflet produced for the first CGR for Crewe, and also of that for Wilmslow, Handforth and Styal which had drawn on and learnt from the earlier experience.

Consideration was given to paras 80/81 of the Community Guidance Review Government Guidance document, and to the various options available to electors to choose from such as a Town, Parish, or Community Council; Area Committee; Tenant Management or Residents & Tenants Association; Area, Community, Neighbourhood Forum; or Community Association. Members were anxious not to appear to limit the choice available by the wording referring predominantly to, for example, Town or Parish Council. It was, therefore, agreed that the leaflet should give equal prominence to all options and that they should be fully explained at the public meetings.

In considering the inclusion of information on the possible precept to be levied on the formation of a new Council it was noted that there had been some lack of appreciation by electors in the Wilmslow review that separate precepts would be levied for the different areas. Although an initial precept, to get the new Council started, could be set by CE Council in advance of any new Town/Parish Council being established it was stressed that after the first year the amount would be set by the new Council; it was agreed that the leaflet should refer to this fact and that the monetary range of precepts levied by existing Councils should be shown.

A question was raised as to which boundaries should be shown on the map in the leaflet and it was agreed that this should be limited to the red boundary only, namely the extent of the area to be covered by the review.

It was agreed that a draft leaflet for a the CGR be circulated at the next meeting of the Sub Committee with a view to starting the consultations with stakeholders on 30 September 2011, and that the project plan be amended accordingly.

c) Draft Press Release

In the light of the recommendations of the Sub-Committee concerning the content of the public information leaflet it was agreed that the press release be expanded to include details of the different options available so as to encourage people to consider the whole spectrum of choices.

d) Draft Public Notice

Paragraph 1 of the draft public notice was to be amended to reflect the wide choice of options available.

e) Public Meetings

In considering the format of the public meetings it was requested that information be included on all the options available, and a resume of the guidance being followed. Details of the two public meetings were confirmed as follows:

- Thursday 15 September – 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Victoria Centre, Crewe
- Friday 16 September – 2.00 – 4.00 pm Crewe Library, Crewe

f) Ballot Paper Format

It was agreed that consultation with electors via a ballot paper be considered at a later stage once the stakeholder consultation responses were known and had been evaluated.

g) Draft Letter

This additional item was circulated at the meeting for consideration. The Sub Committee agreed that any responses received after the closing date would be considered, and that the first paragraph of the letter be amended to reflect the changes to be made to the leaflet, press release and public notice.

It was noted that in addition to all the above items the Cheshire East website would include full access to the official guidance, copies of public notices etc and that there would be a direct link from the front page.

RESOLVED

1. That approval be given to the revised project plan and timetable now submitted, that Members be further advised on the outcome of investigations into the current boundary discrepancy in Leighton Parish, and that the wording of the press release be amended to reflect the expected completion date of the review.
2. That the public information leaflet give equal prominence to the different types of council available to choose from; clear details around the levying of a precept and an indication of the current range levied by existing Town and Parish Councils; that the map show the area of the review; and that a revised leaflet be considered by the Sub-Committee at its next meeting in time for the consultation period to commence on 30 September 2011, with the project plan being amended accordingly.
3. That the draft press release, and the draft public notice, be amended to reflect the complete range of councils types available.
4. That the format of the public meetings include information relating to the official guidance and detailed information relating to the choices on offer.
5. That the draft letter be amended with regard to the closing date and to reflect the expanded information and changes to the preceding items.
6. That the format of the ballot paper be considered following the close of the initial consultation period which was due to end on 28 October 2011.

11 NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

That the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 22 September 2011, but that the time be moved from the originally agreed time of 10.30 am to the afternoon on the rise of the Constitution Committee.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 3.52 pm

Councillor D Marren (Chairman)