

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	30 th June 2015
Report of:	Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Subject/Title:	Notice of Motion – Local Democracy
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Peter Groves, Finance and Assets

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to the following motion, proposed by Councillor K Edwards and seconded by Councillor D Newton at the Council meeting on 26th February 2015:

“This Council recognises the value of local councils throughout Cheshire East. It wishes to work in partnership with them on a continuous basis to improve the well-being of local residents, the prosperity of local businesses, and to enhance the quality of the visitor welcome throughout the borough.

“In particular, this Council recognises the strong programme of support for local democracy through:

- a. welcoming the establishment of new local councils for Crewe, Handforth, Styal, and Wilmslow;*
- b. welcoming the forthcoming establishment of a local council for Macclesfield;*
- c. supporting the work of the National association of Local Councils, through partnership with Cheshire Association of Local Councils;*
- d. looking every opportunity to work positively with local councils to attract external resources, including grants, to improve the quality of life for local residents.”*

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1 of the report be noted.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In order to fulfil the requirements of the Council’s Constitution.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All Cheshire East Council Wards are affected.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Cheshire East local Ward Members are affected.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The notice of motion relates to the Council's policy on local democracy, and its partnerships with local councils.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 The relationship of the Council with the Borough's local councils is of great importance in terms of the influence of Council policies upon, and subsequent benefits to, the Borough's extensive rural communities.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 No direct legal implications arise from the motion.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 No risks would appear to arise from the proposals put forward in the motion.

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 The motion, set out in paragraph 1.1 of this report, was proposed and seconded by Councillors Ken Edwards and David Newton at the meeting of Council on 26th February.
- 11.2 Cabinet now needs to consider the motion and decide how it wishes to respond.
- 11.3 When the Council was created in April 2009, significant areas were not represented by parish councils, including Wilmslow, Handforth, Styal, Crewe and Macclesfield.
- 11.4 As a consequence of a planned programme of Community Governance Reviews, the Council has progressively resolved to create parish councils across the entire Borough; the latest example being the creation of Macclesfield Parish Council with its first elections on 7th May. This demonstrates the commitment of the Council to local democracy across the Borough.
- 11.5 Throughout the process of the Council's Community Governance Reviews, it has consulted local communities, businesses and voluntary groups. Work has also taken place with the Cheshire Association of Local Council.

- 11.6 The Council provides financial support to Cheshire Association of Local Councils, and to Cheshire Community Action which, in turn, support local councils and the Borough's local communities. Such support amounts to over £30,000 for the 2015/16 financial year.

In terms of general support: the Council further assists town and parish councils in finding external funding by conducting funding searches via "GrantFinder". Last year, the War Memorial Scheme was established, with a specific category as part of the community grants scheme, enabling town and parish councils to seek grant funding in order to commemorate the First World War.

The Council provides further support to town and parish councils by running two conferences each year; the hosting of a SharePoint site in which local information can be stored and exchanged; and by general "signposting" when town and parish councils have queries. In addition, the Council's local engagement officers assist local communities with "clean-up days", work with isolated communities and transport projects.

- 11.7 In summary, the Council is demonstrably supportive of local councils, and has, since its inception, worked to establish parish councils where these did not exist, and continues to support local democracy, local communities and local businesses.

12.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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