

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 24 January 2012**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Parekh (Deputy Chair);  
Councillors Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, Capstick, Golby, Hallam and  
Oldham

**1. APOLOGIES**

There were none.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were signed by the Chair.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chair declared a personal non-prejudicial interest as a member of Wooton Parish Council.

Councillor Golby declared a personal non-prejudicial interest as member of Duston Parish Council.

**4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

Mr Jones addressed the Committee on Item 6 – Community Governance Review. He welcomed the report and stated that many residents of West Hunsbury would be in support of it being Parished and that there were many advantages to having a Parish Council.

Mr Foster addressed the Committee and concurred with the opinions of Mr Jones.

Lorraine Avery –addressed the Committee on behalf of the Trade Union Side on Item 7 – Revised Redundancy Framework She commented that the recognised Trade Unions, GMB, Unite and UNISON, were disappointed that the current scheme could not remain in place, as this was the TU's preferred option. However, the Trade Unions do understand the authority's financial position and while the original proposed changes made by management could not be agreed to, we believe that what is in the document is the best the Trade Unions could negotiate for members.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their contributions.

**5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

There were none.

## **6. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report of the Community Governance Review. The Director of Environment and Culture explained that it would be a Borough wide review and would be an opportunity to create new parish council arrangements in areas of Northampton where they were not in existence.

In response to a question of Councillor Golby, the Chief Executive explained that he did not envisage that postal votes would be considered necessary for the Parish Council referenda but legal advice was still being sought on the matter. The Committee noted that there had been a delay in undertaking a community governance review in some areas due to changes by the Boundary Commission and it had therefore deferred.

The Director of Environment and Culture commented that an average parish precept would amount to an estimated £1 per week. However, she commented that costs and demands on council services should not be impacted on by the provision of additional services by Parish Councils. Savings to council services would be found through various arrangements and the voluntary sector be encouraged to actively participate in service delivery. It was further explained that establishing a cross party Steering Group would allow Councillors to be fully informed of the effects to their local areas in order to best inform residents and make any necessary recommendations.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposed processes for undertaking a borough wide Community Governance Review in Northampton which will respond specifically to the boundary issues raised by the Wootton and East Hunsbury parish poll and petition submitted to Council by Upton Residents Association in 2008 and extend the opportunity to create new parish council arrangements to those areas of the town in which they do not currently exist be agreed.
2. That the establishment of a Councillor Steering Group to oversee the review and to make recommendations to Council in relation to proposals for new or amended community governance arrangements be agreed. It was also agreed that the Steering Group be comprised of representation from all political groups on the council.

## **7. REVISED REDUNDANCY FRAMEWORK**

The Committee considered a report on the Revised Redundancy Framework. The Head of Human Resources explained that the Council had two documents, which referred to redundancies and it had been recognised though feedback from employees that the Restructure policy was regarded as burdensome and added unnecessary steps to the changes in working practices that did not involve redundancies. The revised framework was more focused and there had been extensive consultation with the various trade unions.

The Chair commented that it was positive to see such joined up working.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Redundancy Framework, attached at Appendix 1 of the report be approved and adopted

**8. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Chair moved that the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

The Motion was Carried.

<TRAILER\_SECTION>

The meeting concluded at 18.31