

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20 June 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Parekh (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Aziz, Beardsworth, Begum, I. Choudary, Golby, Hallam
and Oldham

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2012 were signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 5

Councillors Matt Golby and Suresh Patel declared personal and non prejudicial interests as members of a Parish Council.

Councillor Suresh Patel also declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as a petitioner for St James ward.

Councillor Mike Hallam declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as a petitioner for Parklands ward.

Councillor Nilesh Parekh declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as a petitioner for Sunnyside and Obelisk ward

Councillor Brian Oldham declared a personal and non prejudicial interest as a petitioner for West Hunsbury ward

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Mr David Huffadine Smith addressed the Committee.

The main points of his address were as follows: -

Mr Huffadine Smith is a Parish Councillor but was not speaking in that context but as a private individual.

He supported the concept of expanding parish council equivalents, as he believed that really local involvement could invigorate new facilities and clubs and

organisations etc with lower level of costs.

He considered that to be successful then the boundaries should be based on natural communities and not necessarily ward boundaries. They should also be kept small as larger areas lost their cohesion.

Some services can be provided by parish councils that would otherwise be the province of principal councils, and who made provision was not the key issue but how funding was raised. The Parish precept should not be so large that it is used to augment other funding streams without check. He believed that there was no legislation in place, which capped a Parish precept.

He believed that as Parish Councillors are elected by the whole community and are rarely affiliated to political parties they were better able to serve the whole of the community.

Mr Liam Costello addressed the Committee.

The main points of his address were as follows: -

He welcomed the recommendations, particularly those for a division of Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council, which he considered too unwieldy.

He would have preferred the approach taken by Milton Keynes who have “parished” the whole area.

He welcomed the consultations but considered that if the terms of reference allowed for it there should not be a referendum.

He stated that legislation does not exist to impose a Parish precept cap although it has not yet become legislation.

5. NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW- STAGE 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor David Mackintosh presented the report asking Committee to that the proposals received for new Parish Councils and boundary changes to existing Parish Councils be taken forward into the detailed consultation stage of the Community Governance Review.

Members asked whether areas that would not be parished would be continuing with the same neighbourhood management system as now. Members were advised that there would be a review of neighbourhood management, with a key aim of involving local Councillors as local leaders, however this was not a matter for the current debate.

A final decision on which areas became parishes would not be made until Council considered the results of the referendum. The new parish councils themselves would determine which services that they would provide. The Leader emphasised that it was very important that if people did support becoming a parish that they understood that

there would be an additional cost, via the precept, and what it was that they would getting for that money.

It was stated that there had been legal advice that the Moulton Leys proposal was not legally possible because of restrictions on making proposals across ward boundaries. It was asked that this be looked at again if the legislation ever changed.

In response to a question about costs Members were advised that budget provision for undertaking the Community Governance Review had been made in the current years budget and that it was hoped to save on the costs of the referendum by holding it in conjunction with the elections for a Police Commissioner.

An addendum was tabled at the meeting in the form of a letter from the Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee of Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council detailing concerns should the parishes split. Committee wee reminded that at this stage they were only determining whether there should be further consultation .

RESOLVED:

1. That the following proposals received in Stage 1 of the Community Governance Review be agreed as the subject of detailed consultation in Stage 2 of the Review:
 - I. The Parklands Ward proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - II. The Rectory Farm proposal for a new Parish.
 - III. The Sunnyside Ward and Obelisk Ward proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - IV. The West Hunsbury Ward proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - V. The Westone Ward proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - VI. The St James Ward proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - /II. The Hunsbury Meadow proposal for a new Parish Council.
 - III. The proposal for a boundary change to the north of Wootton & East Hunsbury Parish Council.
 - IX. The proposal for a boundary change between Wootton & East Hunsbury Parish Council and Collingtree Parish Council.
 - X. The proposal for a boundary change between Hardingstone Parish Council and Great Houghton Parish Council.
 - XI. The proposal for a boundary change to the east of Upton Parish Council.
 - II. The proposal for a division of Wootton & East Hunsbury Parish Council into two

separate Parishes.

2. The recommendation of the Steering Group that the three proposals received by petition which did not meet the community support threshold requirement as set out in the Community Governance Review Terms of Reference are not the subject of detailed consultation in Stage 2 of the Review. The three proposals were a proposal for Moulton Leys, Castle Ward and Phippsville Ward.

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

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6:25 pm