

Full Council - 3rd December 2012

ADDENDUM

Item 9 - Community Governance Review Report

The consultation stages of the Community Governance Review ended on 15th November 2012. Since the publication of the Report to Council on 23rd November 2012 a number of additional responses relating to specific recommendations have been received. These are brought to the attention of the Council for information in making a decision on the recommendations arising from the Community Governance Review but do not form part of the formal consultation process.

West Hunsbury Parish Council Proposal

22 responses have been received in relation to the recommendation to create a new Parish Council in West Hunsbury; 21 responses were opposed to the recommendation and 1 was in favour.

The main comments raised were in relation to lack of awareness about the Local Advisory Poll, there not being an option to vote by post, the low turnout and general comments about the increase in Council Tax that would arise from the levy of a Parish Council precept.

The consultation process, including the conduct of Local Advisory Polls, was conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review and processes developed by the cross party Councillor Community Governance Review Steering Group. As stated in the Report, the outcome of the Local Advisory Polls is only one of the considerations to be taken into account in making recommendations on community governance arrangements that are appropriate for the town in accordance with criteria in the 2007 Act.

Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish Council – Parish Split Proposal

A further 3 responses were received in relation to the recommendation to abolish the existing Parish Council and to create two new Parish Councils; 2 responses were opposed to the recommendations and 1 was in favour.

The main points raised were opposition to the recommendation to abolish the existing Wootton and East Hunsbury Parish and to create two new parishes, concerns about the process undertaken, concerns about the proposed name “Wootton, Wootton Fields and Simpson Manor” for one of the new Parish Councils and concerns about the number of Councillors proposed for each of the two new Parish Councils.

In relation to comments made about the consultation process, this was conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review and processes developed by the cross party Councillor Community Governance Review Steering Group. The Council did not put forward any information during the consultation process that would potentially influence the outcome of the consultation in any way. All aspects of the consultation were advisory and indicative of public opinion and as stated in the Report, the outcome of the

Local Advisory Polls is only one of the considerations to be taken into account in making recommendations on community governance arrangements that are appropriate for the town in accordance with criteria in the 2007 Act.

It is noted that there is a typographical error in recommendation 2.1.11 (d) and paragraph 3.8.11.27 of the report. Council is asked to note that both should read:

“That the new Parish Council be known as Wootton, Wootton Fields and Simpson Manor Parish Council. An alternative style is not recommended.”

The name of the proposed Parish Council was put forward by the Steering Group to reflect the wider geographical area covered by the proposal, as identified in the Parish Poll conducted in 2008.

The proposed size of the two new Parish Councils (number of Parish Councillors recommended) has been based on the existing representation in the area and the need to ensure that representation arrangements are balanced and reflective of the size of the communities.

In addition, comments were made in relation to the financial implications of the proposal, however, as detailed in the Report, the Council made an independent assessment of the financial viability of the proposal to split the existing Parish based on the proposed size and demographics of each area.