

Record of Decision taken by Chief Executive (Directors acting under Interim Arrangements) and Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO)

Decision title: Approval and publication of the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review of Taunton and surrounding parishes.

Chief Executive (Directors) and DMO making the decision: (Alison North – Internal Operations, Andrew Pritchard – External Operations and Climate Change, Chris Hall – Development and Place, James Barrah – Housing and Communities) & Kevin Williams – Deputy Monitoring Officer

Author Contact Details: Marcus Prouse – Specialist - Governance

Date of Decision: 12th November 2021

Details of decision:

At the meeting of the Full Council on 19th October 2021, members resolved that a community governance review be undertaken of the unparished area of Taunton and surrounding parishes (Trull, Bishop's Hull, Comeytrowe, Norton Fitzwarren, Staplegrove, Kingston St. Mary, Cheddon Fitzpaine, West Monkton) with a view to the creation of a parish or parishes and council(s) to serve all or part of that area.

As part of this Council resolved to also support the following resolutions;

- b) The Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review be delegated to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and Monitoring Officer or Deputy, after consultation with the Community Governance Review Working Group and the Leader of the Council for later publication.
- c) The first round of consultation wording be delegated to be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer for use as the basis for the first round of communications in respect of the Community Governance Review with authority delegated to the Specialist in Governance and Democracy to make minor amendments to the text if required, after consultation with the Community Governance Review Working Group and the Leader of the Council.
- d) The Communications and Consultation Plan set out at Appendix 10 to this report be approved, with authority delegated to the Specialist in Governance and Democracy to make minor amendments to the text if required, after consultation with the Community Governance Review Working Group.
- e) To authorise a general delegation to the Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer, after consultation with the Community Governance Review Working Group to take such action as necessary to progress the community governance review and amend the timetable in accordance with legislation and the statutory guidance.

This decision is a delegated decision to be taken with authority from Full Council and as such, is not subject to the Call-in procedure applying to Executive Portfolio Holder decisions and as such will come into force immediately.

Reasons for proposed decision:

The four Directors are acting jointly in the role of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service on an interim and deputy basis upon the expected appointment of a new CEO and Head of Paid Service to be approved by Full Council on 17th November 2021, as agreed by the Leader of the Council and previous CEO in the agreed Interim Arrangements document signed on 29/10/2021.

There is a statutory process which has to be followed in order to commence the review which starts with the publication of the Terms of Reference for the Review (attached to this Record of Decision) and a formal consultation which will commence on 17 November 2021. Details of the communications and consultation plan and Stage 1 Consultation document are also attached.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

A range of alternative options were discussed and debated at the Council meeting on 19th October 2021. Background to this meeting can be found at:

<https://democracy.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=325&MId=3011>

The below has been completed:	Name(s)	Date
Relevant Portfolio Holder(s) consulted	Leader of the Council	5/11/21
Relevant ward councillor(s) informed	<p>Cllrs B Weston, L Baker, S Wakefield, D Johnson, C Ellis, M Peters, H Farbahi, S Nicholls, T Deakin, C Booth, F Smith-Roberts, S Lees, R Lees, F Smith, D Darch, E Firmin, M Hill, H Prior-Sankey, A Pritchard, R Tully, D Wedderkopp.</p> <p>All other ward Councillors are part of the Working Group.</p>	9/11/21
The following are if appropriate / applicable: Yes/No. If yes the implications should be attached to this decision notice.		
Finance implications	<p>As per the Council report in October it is estimated that the consultation process would cost between £30,000 and £50,000, with possible stand alone election costs in May 2023 of approximately £13,500. £24,000 to £34,000 which can be met from within the Internal Operations Directorate and will be reported as part of the</p>	Yes

	budget monitoring process. Request for additional funding would be presented within the January 2022 report to full Council.	
Legal implications	The Community Governance Review is being conducted as per the Department for Communities and Governance (DCLG) and Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) guidance on Community Governance Reviews and in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.	Yes
Links to corporate aims	This is a key project for 2021-22 within the Internal Operations Directorate Plan and links to the Corporate Strategy	Yes
Safeguarding/ Community Safety implications	None	
Climate and Sustainability implications	None	
Equalities Impact Safeguarding Implications	These have been addressed in the Equality Impact Assessment appended to the October 2021 Council report	Yes
Risk management	Any risks associated with this Review have been discussed clearly with the Member Working Group as the meetings have proceeded so that the Councillors on the Group could take an informed judgement of the situation.	Yes
Partnership implications	Appropriate consultation will take place with local Councils and others as part of the Community Governance Review process and this is set out in the Communications and Consultation Plan appended. Discussions with the Boundary Commission and Somerset County Council have taken place since July 2021. A pre-consultation meeting with representatives of the eight parish areas and the Taunton Charter	Yes

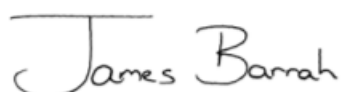
	Trustees was held on 3/11/21	
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Any conflicts of interest declared by Leader or Portfolio Holders consulted on the proposed decision. If Yes provide confirmation from Chief Executive to grant dispensation for the Leader's / Portfolio Holder's views to be considered. N/A

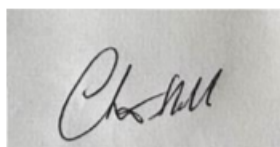
Decision Maker

I am aware of the details of this decision(s), considered the reasons, options, representations and consultation responses and give my approval / agreement to its implementation.

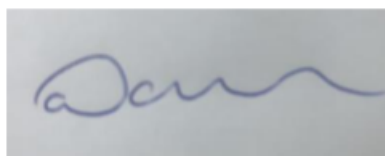
Signed: Acting jointly as Chief Executive as per the Interim Arrangements;



JAMES BARRAH
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES



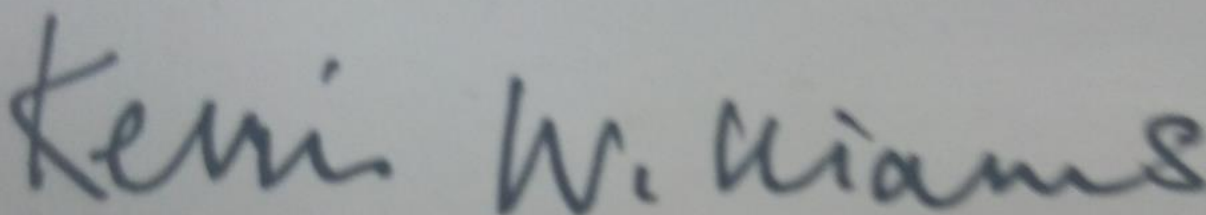
CHRIS HALL
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND PLACE



ALISON NORTH
DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS



ANDREW PRITCHARD
DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL OPERATIONS



Kevin Williams – Deputy Monitoring Officer

Date: 12th November 2021

Note – This decision record is for decisions taken by Chief Executive/Director. The decision(s) can be implemented in accordance with the approved delegations.

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review Document

Appendix 2 - Stage 1 Consultation Document

Note: *A copy should also be sent to the Governance Team – governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk*