

SWT Community Governance Review Working Group

27.05.21

Attendees: Cllr H Prior-Sankey (Chair), Cllr L Lisgo (Vice-Chair), Cllrs J Hunt, F Smith, L Whetlor.

Officers: A. Tregellas, M. Prouse, C. Rendell

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey was duly appointed Chair of the Working Group.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Cllr Libby Lisgo was duly appointed Vice-Chair of the Working Group.

3. Apologies

None. Cllrs R Lees, Coles and Cavill absent.

4. Review Terms of Reference

The Governance and Democracy Specialist went through a slide pack giving an overview on the relevant considerations the review would have to consider, information pertaining to Charter Trustee areas and the potential pitfalls if looking to abolish or amend existing Parish boundaries.

The revised timetable document was also shared and discussed.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- The flexibility of the timetable was discussed, bearing in mind the consultation was due to take place over part of the Summer Holidays. The question was asked as to whether the period of consultation could be extended to 14 September (for consideration at a later meeting). The Governance Manager confirmed this could be flexed to later on as some capacity had been built into the timetable and certain pieces of work could be done in tandem without having an impact on the new organisation 'going live' from 1st April 2023
- The Council has 12 months from the publication of the Terms of Reference to complete the review and approve the Local Reorganisation Order
- The Parish Councils that surrounded the Unparished Area would have to be approached as part of the Consultation. There were drawbacks and benefits to looking to include further areas in a bigger Town Council, as negotiations could be contentious and have legal ramifications.
- The size and sustainability of a Town or Parish Council was discussed and the budget calculation requirement. It was felt this would come later on once discussions over transfers and responsibilities was in play with the Shadow Council.
- Whether information regarding the population size of the unparished area could be provided

- The Governance Manager made it clear that the Group had to be seen to be taking a broader view of the options available to them.
- Councillors suggested that the Revised Timetable included Somerset County Councillors to the consultee list as well as the Charter Trustees.
- The Governance Manager advised that external resource would be procured to keep the project on track and give specialist advice.
- A separate risks and issues log would be created and reviewed at each meeting.
- A Communication and Consultation Plan would be drawn up and brought back to the next meeting of the Working Group

5. Complete the Working Group Scoping document

The Governance Manager completed the Working Group Scoping Document with the assistance of the group the completed document would be circulated after the meeting.

6. Any other Business

N/A

7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was proposed to be 10th June 2021 at 9.30am, with the frequency of meetings to be determined based on the workload.

The meeting closed at 12.51pm