

# Minutes



## Community Governance Review Committee 12th July 2017

Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
J Abbott	Yes	Mrs J Pell	Apologies
P Barlow	Yes	Mrs W Schmitt (Chairman)	Yes
Mrs J Beavis	Apologies	R van Dulken	Yes
Mrs D Garrod	Apologies	Mrs S Wilson	Apologies
Mrs J Money	No		

### 1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**INFORMATION:** The following interest was declared:

Councillor J Abbott declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘Community Governance Review – Site Considerations’ as a Member of Rivenhall Parish Council.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Councillor Abbott remained in the meeting and he took part in the discussion when the Item was considered.

### 2 **QUESTION TIME**

**INFORMATION:** There were no questions asked, or statements made.

Principally, these Minutes record decisions taken only and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

### 3 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - BACKGROUND**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report on the background to the Council’s proposed Community Governance Review.

It was noted that guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government suggested that Principal Councils should conduct a Community Governance Review every 10 to 15 years. Whilst no formal District-wide reviews had been commissioned by the Council in the past 30 years there had been a number of smaller issue based reviews.

The District was experiencing significant growth as proposed in the draft District Local Plan and it was an appropriate time to consider on-going community governance for the Braintree District. If, following the review, changes to Parish governance and/or boundaries were necessary, these would be implemented with effect from the next scheduled elections in May 2019.

A community governance review should reflect the identities and interests of communities; be effective and convenient; provide community cohesion; and have regard to the size, population and boundaries of local communities or parishes. Terms of Reference for the review had to be published specifying the area under review and the review must conclude within a period of 12 months by the publication of recommendations.

The Community Governance Review Committee had been established at the Annual General Meeting on 24th April 2017 to oversee the review process and to make recommendations to Council. Initially, the Committee would be required to formalise a consultation position in respect of both proposals which had been put forward by Parish/Town Councils; and large development sites. This position would be recommended to full Council on 24th July 2017 for approval.

The timetable for the review was:-

24th July 2017 - Adoption of Terms of Reference  
1st August 2017 to 30th September 2017 - Initial public consultation  
Autumn 2017 – Consideration of initial responses  
11th December 2017 – Publication of draft recommendations  
1st January 2018 to 28th February 2018 - Public consultation on draft recommendations  
4th June 2018 – Publication of final recommendations  
23rd July 2018 - Council Resolution to adopt  
August 2018 – Preparation and publication of prescribed Order

The Council would be required to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person, or body who appeared to have an interest in the review. The Council must take into account and consider any representations received in connection with the review, to publish its recommendations and to ensure that people who might have an interest in the review were informed of these. It was proposed that an interactive web site should be set up to collate and record all representations. Where changes to existing arrangements were required, the Council would complete its review by making a “reorganisation order”.

**DECISION:** That the scope of the Community Governance Review and the actions which could arise from it be noted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To support the continued development of the project for the forthcoming Community Governance Review.

## 4 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – SITE CONSIDERATIONS

**INFORMATION:** As part of the Community Governance Review, Parish and Town Councils had been invited to highlight issues for consideration. Responses had been received from 31 Parish/Town Councils and seven of them had requested that changes to boundaries, or representational arrangements be considered.

In addition, Great Notley Parish Council had suggested that the Eastern boundary of the Parish be extended to include the proposed large development site for approximately 1750 properties at land East of London Road, Braintree/Black Notley. Options for future community governance arrangements for this site included no change; re-defined boundaries; the creation of a new Parish; or the postponement of a formal decision pending the establishment of the new community.

It was noted that there were a number of other large development sites adjoining existing boundaries and it was proposed that the Council should publish a position statement regarding these prior to public consultation on the review. The sites identified included Forest Road, North Witham/Rivenhall (370 properties); Oak Road, Halstead (292 properties); Pods Brook Road/London Road, A120, Braintree (215 properties); and South-West Witham/Hatfield Peverel (813 properties).

**DECISION:** To Recommend to Council that:-

- (1) The initial proposals put forward by Parish/Town Councils for inclusion in the Community Governance Review and outlined in paragraph 1.3 of the report, be adopted for consultation.
- (2) The following proposed large development sites be identified as being within the Parishes/Towns indicated in bold type and that the forthcoming Community Governance Review be carried out on this basis:-
  - Forest Road, North Witham/Rivenhall: **Witham**
  - Oak Road, Halstead: **Halstead**
  - Pods Brook Road/London Road, A120, Braintree: **Braintree**  
(to be removed from consultation)
  - South-West Witham/Hatfield Peverel: **Witham**
- (3) No change be made to current boundary arrangements with respect to the proposed large development site at land East of London Road, Braintree/Black Notley, but that the position be reviewed once the new community becomes established.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To establish the Council's Community Governance Review consultation position in relation to:- (i) proposals identified by Parish and Town Councils; and (ii) specific development sites across the District.

5 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**INFORMATION:** Consideration was given to a report containing the proposed Terms of Reference, including the consultation position and timetable, for the forthcoming District Community Governance Review.

In discussing this Item, it was stated that specific consultation would take place with Great Saling Parish Council and Great Notley Parish Council in respect of the suggested changes put forward by these Parish Councils.

**DECISION:** That the proposed Terms of Reference be recommended to Full Council for adoption including the initial suggestions put forward by Great Saling Parish Council, Coggeshall Parish Council, Kelvedon Parish Council, Panfield Parish Council, Rivenhall Parish Council, Witham Town Council and Great Notley Parish Council; and the proposed larger development sites at Forest Road, North Witham/Rivenhall; Oak Road, Halstead; and South-West Witham/Hatfield Peverel contained in the draft Braintree District Local Plan, but excluding the proposed strategic development site at land East of London Road, Braintree/Black Notley.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To agree the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review.

The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 6.20pm.

Councillor Mrs W Schmitt  
(Chairman)