

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR CHESWICK GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Introduction

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council received a request from Cheswick Green Parish Council, to increase the number of Councillors that serve on the Parish Council from five to seven.

At present, they have five Members but occasionally find themselves inquorate at meetings. By increasing the number of Councillors they are hopeful this will improve the attendance at meetings. The Parish Council also considers that an increase in Councillors is needed due to the amount of business now being conducted.

Solihull MBC agreed to carry out a Community Governance Review and published Terms of Reference on 1st October 2014, in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Consultation

Publication of the Terms of Reference started a six week period of consultation. The consultation methods used included:

- Setting up a web page on the SMBC website for the Community Governance Review and linking it to the Consultations Page, together with an online response form
- Writing to the Parish Clerk and all SMBC Members for the relevant Ward
- Issuing a press release
- Displaying notices on parish notice boards
- Including an item in the parish newsletter delivered to all households in the parish
- Links/coverage on the Parish Council web page
- SMBC Twitter feed, inviting comments on the review

Responses to Consultation

A total of 5 responses were received from local residents (out of a Parish electorate of 1,940), together with one from one of the Solihull MBC Councillors who represents the Blythe Ward:

- Cllr Linda Brown, SMBC Ward Member – supporting the increase having taken into account the figures for other parish councils.
- 3 x members of the public – supporting the increase on the grounds of the increased workload for the Council
- 2 x members of the public – opposing the increase on the following grounds:
 - An increase should only be considered after a significant increase in the number of houses;
 - Cheswick Green currently enjoy a ratio of only 1 councillor per 388 constituents. Even if the number of constituents were to increase by 500, this would still put the Parish Council at a 1:488 ratio, which is still lower than four other parishes in the borough

The responses were reported to the Solihull MBC Governance Committee on 18th November 2014.

Draft Proposal

The responses from the consultation indicate there is no significant objection to increasing the number of Councillors on Cheswick Green Parish Council. Taking into account the guidance, the statutory obligations and the results of the consultation exercise, the Governance Committee has therefore agreed to publish a draft proposal to increase the number of Councillors on Cheswick Green Parish Council to 7.

Any comments on this draft proposal must be received by no later than **Thursday 8th January 2015**

by email to: dmerry@solihull.gov.uk or

by post to:

Deborah Merry
Head of Democratic Services
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

What do I need to do now?

The draft proposal is to increase the number of Parish Councillors for Cheswick Green Parish Council to seven. If you have an alternative or do not agree with the proposal please make sure you tell us now, please see the section above on how to submit your views. If you agree with the proposal you may also wish to show your support by submitting your view as per the section above.

Commencement dates for any new arrangements

The Council envisages that if an Order is made it will come into effect no later than 1 March 2015. Should the final decision be taken to increase the number of councillors, the additional seats will be filled at the ordinary elections of Parish Councillors on 7th May 2015.

In coming to its final recommendation in the Review the Council will take account of the views of all local people. The act requires the Council to consult the local government electors for the area under review and any other person or body who appears to have an interest in the review and to take the representations that are received into account by judging them against the criteria in the Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007.

What happens to your views?

The Council will notify each consultee and other persons or bodies who have made representation of the outcome of the review. The Council intends to publish all decisions that it takes in the Review, giving its reasons for taking these decisions. This will be done via the Council's website and by written communication.

The Council's website is www.solihull.gov.uk

Please navigate to the *About the Council* > *Voting* part of the site where there is a section for Community Governance Reviews. You can view this and previous documents applicable to the review.